



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

LESSONS from LIFE

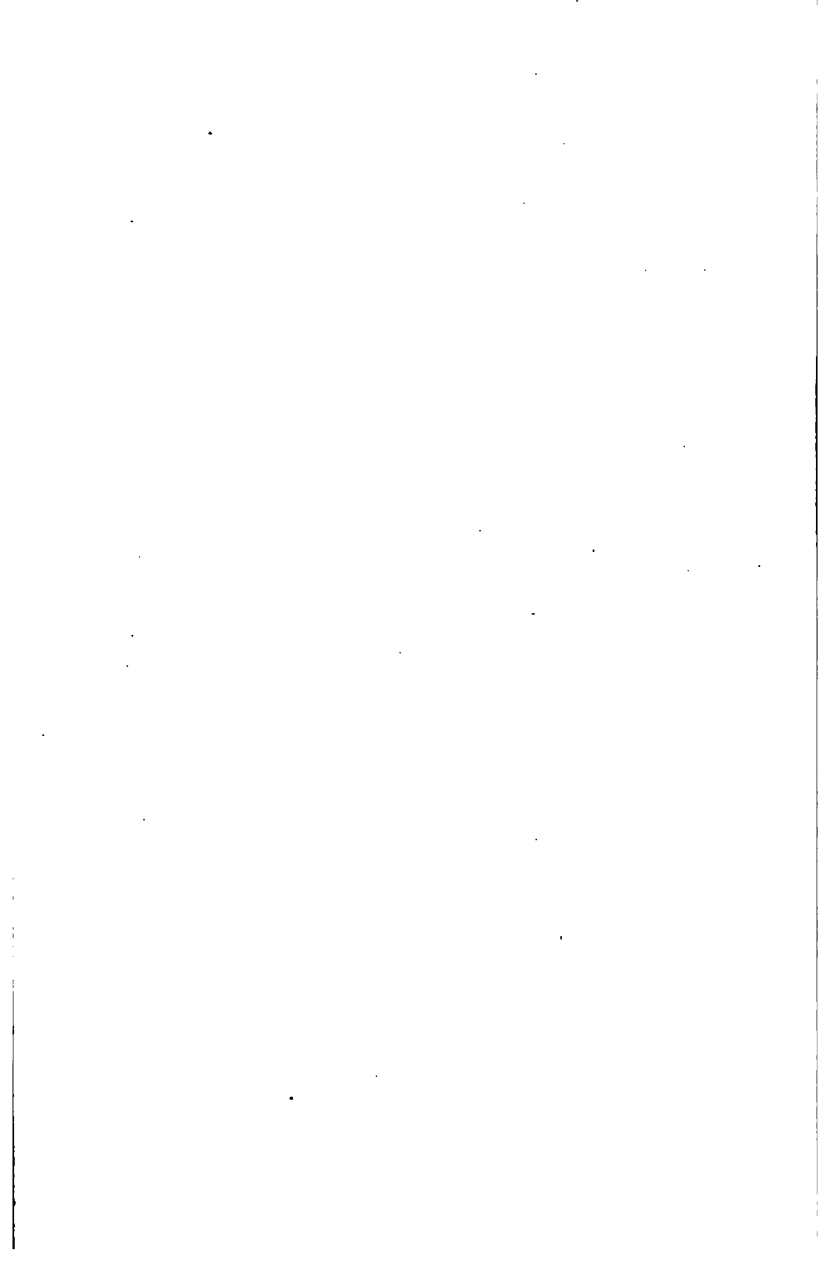
Stories and Teachings
for The Young

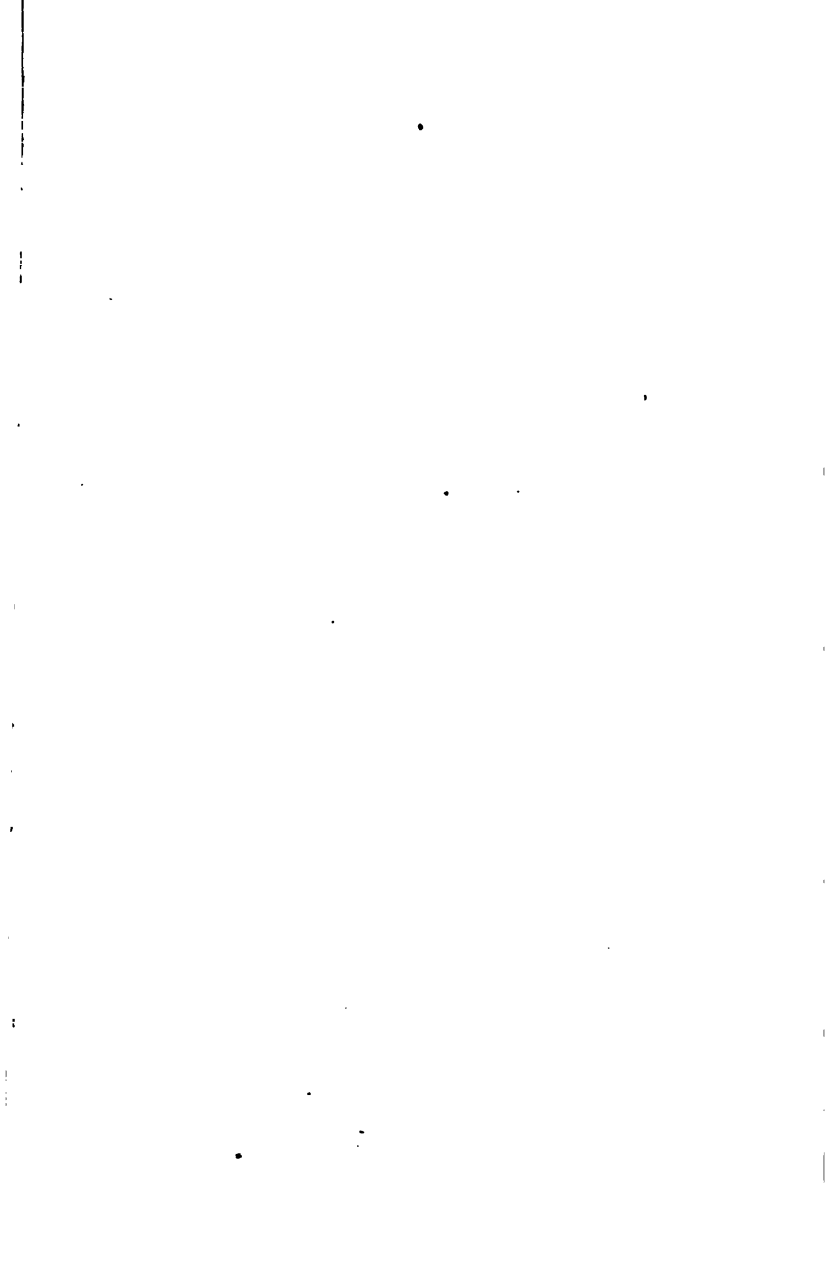
By Mrs. Wm. W. Allen

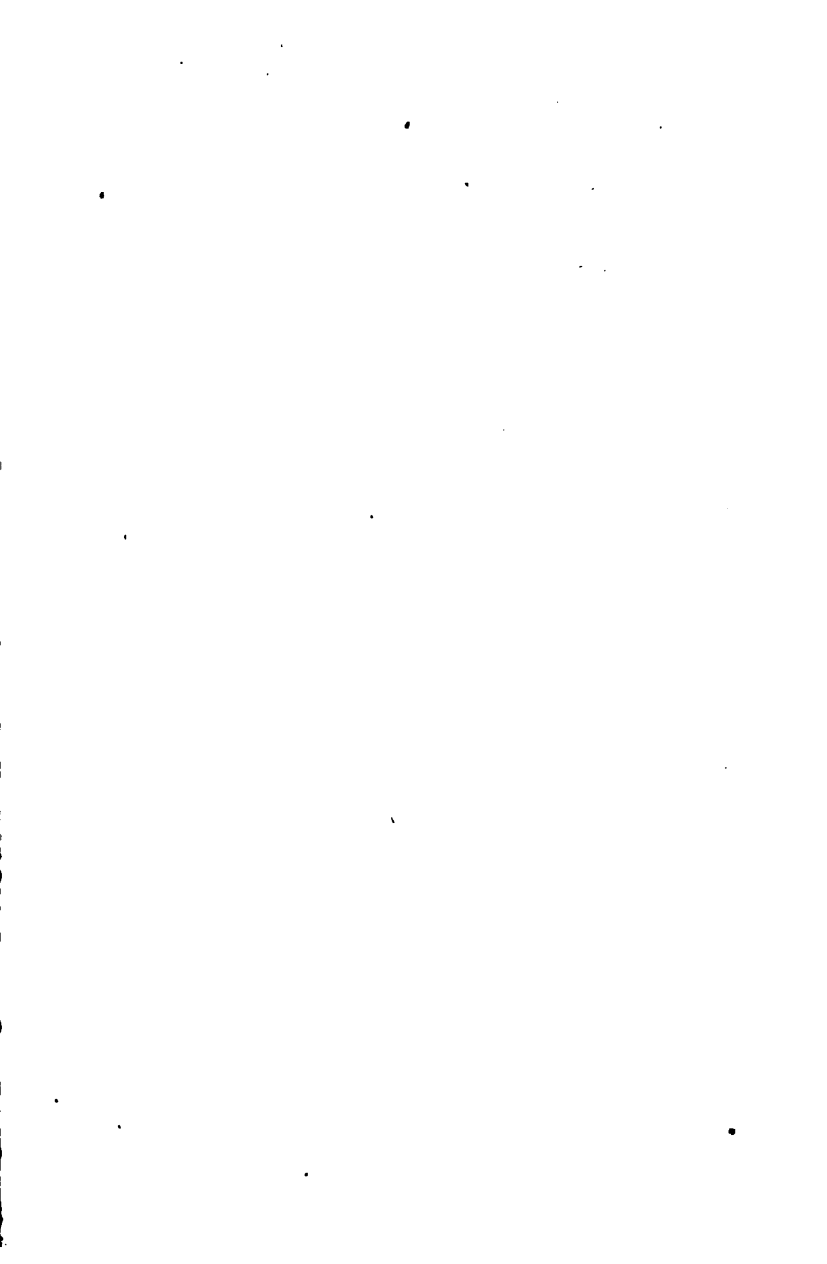


600070474S







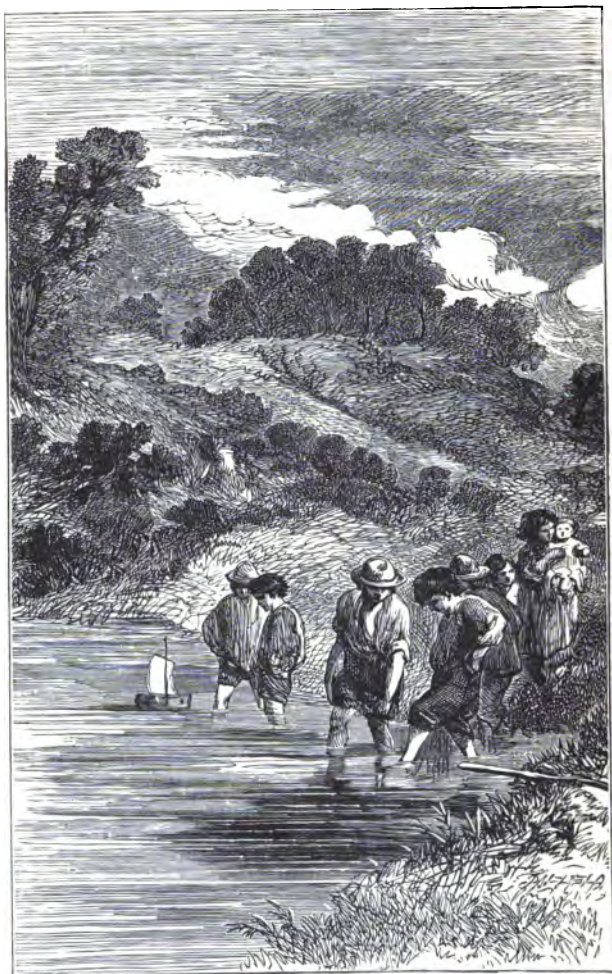




· LESSONS FROM LIFE.







THE BOAT-HOLE.

ISSUES FROM LIT

THE LIT FROM THE LIT FROM THE



THE LIT FROM THE
LIT FROM THE

100

100

100

100

100

100

100

100

100

100

100

100

100

100

100

100

LESSONS FROM LIFE.

STORIES AND TEACHINGS
FOR THE YOUNG.

.
.
.



THE DRAGON-FLY.

Page 172.

THOMAS NELSON AND SONS,
LONDON, EDINBURGH, AND NEW YORK.



LESSONS FROM LIFE.

STORIES AND TEACHINGS FOR THE YOUNG.

By the late

*REV. WILLIAM ARNOT,
Author of "Illustrations of the Book of Proverbs," &c.*



LONDON: THOMAS NELSON AND SONS.
EDINBURGH AND NEW YORK.

1878.

270. g. 788.




CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION,	...	...	...	...	9
I. "HE CARETH FOR YOU,"	...	...	...	...	12
II. ABOUT PIGEONS,	...	...	...	...	20
III. ICE ACCIDENTS,	...	...	...	...	33
IV. "THE LORD HATH NEED OF HIM,"	...	...	...	...	39
V. "WHEN I AM WEAK, THEN AM I STRONG,"	...	...	...	...	48
VI. WE DON'T NEED PAPA	...	...	...	...	50
VII. IT IS TRUTH THAT SAVES,	...	...	...	...	64
VIII. AFRAID IN THE DARK,	...	...	...	...	72
IX. A FRIEND SHUT OUT,	...	...	...	...	78
X. A CLEAN TONGUE,	...	...	...	...	83
XI. THE FOWLER'S SNARE,	...	...	...	...	88
XII. COST A HUNDRED POUNDS,	...	...	...	...	94
XIII. THE OMNIBUS,	...	...	...	...	100
XIV. AN INCIDENT OF TRAVEL,	...	...	...	...	108
XV. WRECKS,	...	...	...	...	117
XVI. ATTACK AND DEFENCE,	...	...	...	...	123

XXVII. OFFENDING LITTLE ONES,	...	...	...	133
XVIII. THE MAN AT THE WHEEL,	...	...	...	139
XIX. BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE,	...	...	...	144
XX. THE CATERPILLAR AND THE CART,	...	...	...	151
XXI. A FRIEND IN NEED, A FRIEND INDEED,	...	...	...	163
XXII. THE DRAGON-FLY,	...	...	...	170
XXIII. THE SOFT ANSWER,	...	...	...	173
XXIV. A HEROINE IN THE HEBRIDES,	...	...	...	181
XXV. HOW A LITTLE BOY FELL INTO A DIFFICULTY, AND HOW HE GOT OUT AGAIN,	...	...	...	184
XXVI. A WATERSPOUT,	..	...	...	195
XXVII. LOOK ON THIS PICTURE, AND ON THAT,	...	...	...	206
XXVIII. THE ROSE-BUSHES,	...	...	...	211
XXIX. BE IN TIME,	..	...	...	213

LESSONS FROM LIFE.

Introduction.

N eminent minister in the west of Scotland, who is at once a preacher and a poet, was called to address a very large meeting of children in the City Hall of Glasgow. As a great proportion of the audience seemed to be very free and easy both in their clothes and their conduct, and as two speakers had preceded him, my friend rightly judged that he ought not to put the attention of the multitude, already ominously swaying, to any severe strain. Accordingly, he told them two or three good stories in succession.

Having thus thoroughly gained their attention, he resolved to beguile them into the reception of a moral lesson on the head of the good-

humour which they displayed. As soon as the tumult that followed the last great stroke had subsided, he began, "Now, children, this shows;" but he never succeeded in getting a step further. An urchin, in a thin, sharp voice, that reached the further end of the hall, interrupted him precisely at that point with a shout,—“Never mind what it shows; give us another story.” There was nothing for it, but either to let the scene drop there and then, or continue the performance in accordance with the declared taste of the audience.

I mention this case for the purpose of assuring my young readers that it is not ours. This example gives its lesson by contrast. You are not a mob crowded together in a hot hall; neither are you ill clad or ill educated. I have you one by one; or at most in groups of two or three round the fireside on a winter evening. It is not necessary for me to keep the story constantly going, and avoid the introduction of an instructive lesson, lest I should overtask your patience.


Sooth to say, unless my readers profit by the lessons which my tales contain, the tales themselves will scarcely keep their attention awake.

"Story I have none to tell, sir," in the sense of hairbreadth escapes by flood and field. My narrative is always very simple, and sometimes perhaps also dull. Those who "never mind what it shows," will, I fear, seldom obtain profit from these lessons. For the most part, my story has no brightness in itself; and it is only when it is turned over in the sunlight that I expect it will now and then emit a beam. In short, if my stories have any value at all, it lies in what they "show."

I.

“HE CARETH FOR YOU.”

1 PETER v. 7.

“ HE heavens declare the glory of God;”
so saith the Scripture. But I listen,
and hear no voice; I look up, and
see no letters of fire on the blue field above,
spelling out his great and terrible name. Who
can, by searching there, find out God? None:
thou art a God that hidest thyself.

We must learn about him first in his Word.
He has revealed himself there. All this world
is hidden from view in the night: when the
sun rises, you behold its beauty. So we are all
ignorant of God, till Christ come to reveal him:
the light of the glory of God shines to us from
the face of Jesus. But when we have once
become acquainted with him in his Word, and

are at peace with him through the love of Christ, we may meet him, and hold intercourse with him as "our Father," in all his works and all his ways.

I propose in this lesson to point out some marks of his kindness and care in the AIR THAT WE BREATHE.

Let us first take a glance at the provision made for supplying the world with water. Water is necessary both to animal and to vegetable life. It is thought that the moon has no water. It is a burnt and barren world. It could not be the home of living creatures. It is a dreary, lonely place. How unlike the beautiful Earth, which God has made and prepared as the home of his children !

Vast quantities of water are stored in our seas ; and an abundant supply is brought to our doors for use. Not an atom of the mass is ever lost. The soiled water is carried away by the drains and rivers ; and the clean water is brought by the clouds, and poured in rain upon the hills. The water that comes to us in springs and streams of crystal purity, is the same that flowed away in a very polluted state by the rivers to the sea. When it is drawn up to the

clouds, it is distilled and purified ; all the filthiness is left behind.

The blood in a living body is very like the water-supply of the world. The blood is the life. When it escapes, life fades away. But by being sent in secret channels down through all the members of the body, the blood is rendered impure. When used, it is like used water, not fit for use again until it undergo a cleansing process. The water, when it is made foul by use, is taken to the sea, and there purified ; but where can we find a great vessel into which the blood of our bodies may be poured in order to be cleansed ? There is such a vessel prepared within the body. The lungs are two immense lobes, in structure somewhat like a sponge. The blood, after being used, is poured through small pipes into these vessels, that it may there undergo a renewing process. But how can the impurities be removed from the blood, after you have got it into the lungs ?

Here the air comes in ; and here you will see the use and the value of air. When you draw in breath, you bring a large quantity of atmospheric air into the lungs ; there it comes in contact with the blood, only a thin membrane lying

between them. Now, the air is made up mainly of two ingredients,—as one might mix water and milk in a vessel,—and the air so composed has power to draw into itself all the impurities that float in the blood, as a dry sponge drinks up drops of water. The air, during the few moments that it remains in the lungs, licks up all the foreign particles that floated in the blood, and leaves the blood pure. Then, in shorter time than I have taken to tell it, you force out the air that you drew in; and it in going out carries all the impurities away. This process is repeated about fourteen or fifteen times every minute all the time of your life, without ceasing, night or day.

One set of pipes, called *arteries*, carry the pure blood from the lungs and heart all through the members, to sustain life; and another set of pipes, lying nearer the surface, called *veins*, bring back the used blood, to be filtrated in the reservoirs. If blood flow from a wound, you may tell whether it comes from an artery or a vein. That which flows in the artery is bright red; that which flows in the vein is much darker.

In the same way two leaden pipes lie close

to each other inside the wall of an inhabited house; one brings the pure water in, and the other carries the foul water out. If one of these pipes should spring a leak and flood the room, you could tell whether it was the supply-pipe or the waste-pipe that had given way: for the supply-pipe, if broken, would give out clean water; the waste-pipe, foul. Thus, you perceive, we could not live without air; but neither could we live without water. True; yet the air is much more constantly needed, and therefore it is much more fully supplied. Although water is abundant in the world, some trouble is needed to reach it. We must either go to it, or bring it to our houses. If I were thirsty, I could go myself to the well, or send another; and although the journey should occupy an hour, I would survive; I could bear the thirst until the water reached me. But when I need a mouthful of breath, if I could not obtain it till somebody should bring it from the well,—alas for me! I should be dead long before my messenger could return.

Our Father in heaven knew this, and mark how richly he has provided. Water is plentiful enough, and near enough, although we do not

live beneath it, like the fishes. But if air were not more plentiful, and nearer, we should all die. We are plunged into the ocean of air, and live in it as fishes live in water. The air is so vast that it encircles all the globe to a depth of about forty miles. It lies over us, and presses gently on our lips, at all times, and in all places. When we need breath—and we need it many times every minute from the cradle to the grave—we have no more to do than simply open our lips, and it gushes in. Make an *emptiness* in your chest, and it is instantly filled with air. This is a marvellous example of wisdom and love in the creation of a world. "He careth for us."

But I have said that our *expiration*—that is, the air thrown out of the lungs in breathing—is charged with manifold impurities, like foul water flowing from the city towards the sea. Is there no danger lest the constant outpouring of contaminated air from unnumbered millions of living creatures should, in the long run, defile the whole stock of air that floats in the firmament? This danger is averted by another wonder of wisdom and fatherly thoughtfulness. Vegetables—that is, all trees and plants, great

and small, that grow on the ground—have lips on their leaves, and breathe as well as their betters. Now, according to the proverb, "What is one man's meat is another man's poison;" the impurities which animals throw out in breathing are the very life of the vegetables. They drink in greedily all the offscourings, and thrive upon them. Indeed, vegetation would languish if it did not get in the air those things that are refuse to us. If that refuse were left in the air, our breath would be poisoned; but the leaves of plants kindly lick up all these, and so we obtain the breath of life in its purity again.

Thus, in every breath you draw, you may see marks of our heavenly Father's kindness and care. When he made the earth and the sea and the air, he made them to suit us and the lower creatures that surround us. With infinite skill he poured various ingredients together to constitute the atmosphere, so that it should absorb and carry away the waste and refuse from animal life; and then he created the herbs of the field with such a nature that they should live upon that waste, and so keep the air ever sweet and new. "How manifold, O Lord, are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all."

The love of Jesus is like the air of heaven ; it presses mightily but softly upon us all around. "Lo, I am with you alway." "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock ; *if any man open*, I will come in."

II.

ABOUT PIGEONS.



OUR house, when I was a boy, was perched on the bank of a beautiful winding river. The land on either side, partly cultivated and partly in grass, stretched away to the roots of the two ranges of hills that bounded the valley. We were well acquainted with all manner of living creatures, tame and wild,—flying, running, creeping, and swimming. Our chief companions and play-fellows, in those days, were either winged or quadruped. Dogs and rabbits, pigeons and singing-birds, were at once our treasures and our companions.

Beasts of prey did not trouble us much; for wolves were extirpated in the days of our forefathers, and foxes were by that time few and far

between. Many stories were told of Reynard's cunning and cleverness in stealing a goose for his supper, but in our quarter we were never troubled by his depredations. Rats were more dreaded than any more bulky adversaries. Woe to the young rabbits and young pigeons, if the rats could reach their dwelling-place !

One very tender incident remains upon my memory, in connection with a very small and very beautiful white pigeon. I had become the proud and happy owner of a pair. I had constructed for them a suitable house inside the roof of the barn, with two neat holes through the gable, by which they might fly abroad and return home at pleasure. A pretty wooden perch was fixed outside, for the convenience of alighting from flight. This erection was amply sheltered from the rain by a projecting roof, and the whole was painted in brilliant white. We imagined that, as the inhabitants were very clean, their habitation should correspond ; we thought the brightness and beauty of its vestibule would help to entice the owners to their home. This is a good rule for creatures of a higher order than pigeons. A clean house, and a bright hearth, and a comfortable meal, and a

smiling welcome, are of use in human habitations, to draw the family towards home.

My thoughts by day and my dreams by night centred in these most lovely doves. The elder children, observing the excess of my passion for the pets, took various means to vex and frighten me,—all for amusement. I am very sorry that this instinct of teasing the little ones seems to be almost universal among elder brothers and sisters. Not that they mean to be cruel. They think it is all good fun, and that it hurts nobody. It is not fun to the child; it is serious in his esteem. He has all the sensation of being cruelly persecuted. These very small annoyances may leave an ugly mark on the memory of the very little man. It is better that his seniors should avoid these tricks. The mischief which they cause is not measured by their bulk, but by the exaggerated thoughts of the teased and angry child.

One fine summer day, when I was in charge of the cows on their pasture on the opposite side of the river,—my duty being to see that said cows kept to their lawful ground, and did not trespass on the green corn that grew unfenced in the neighbouring field,—an elder sister called

me from the end of the house, and held up in her hands one of my pigeons, making signs to indicate that the bird was dead. I called across the river with the eagerness of a great grief, demanding to know whether the bird really were dead; and if dead, what creature had killed it. She did not give me a direct answer. The bird was really living, and she would not tell a direct untruth; but she gave me evasive answers, and repeated the signs, which made me fear the worst. She retired behind the house before I could obtain satisfaction.

I was left in an agony of suspense. I dared not leave my charge. I could not go home till noon. The torment increased, and soon became intolerable. Is my pigeon living or dead? No one appeared to tell. Little did my sister suspect how much pain she had caused me. If she had known how the uncertainty was tearing my heart, she would have gone through fire and water for my relief. She was not lacking in love, but she lacked wisdom as to how a child should be treated. She was but a child herself, and had not experience.

I could not wait till noon; some settlement must immediately be reached. I knew nothing

about casting lots. That method did not occur to me. But another plan involving the same principle was suddenly suggested, and as suddenly adopted. I lay stretched on the flowery grass, leaning on my elbows, with my face toward the ground. I gazed tearfully into the roots of the grass, but could find no light. One of the cows, a tame and confiding creature, was browsing near, with her head directly towards my head. It is well known that cattle, when feeding on pasture, move very slowly forward, licking the grass bare as they advance. I knew the cow, on coming to the spot where I lay, must necessarily diverge a little, in order to avoid me. Her progress, as yet, pointed in a perfectly straight line to me, and nothing indicated on which side she would pass. Making an arbitrary rule, I suddenly determined with myself: If she pass on my right, the pigeon is living; if she pass on my left, the pigeon is dead. This settled, I lay as still as a stone, that nothing on my part might derange the balance, and so interfere with the certainty of the result.

Thus far all is clear. The writing is legible on the tablets of my memory up to this point. But beyond, there is dimness. The memory of

events that occurred in childhood is like carved slabs in Nimrod's palace, or the Moabite Stone;—some portions, through accidental circumstances better preserved, may be read as if they had been written yesterday; while others, more exposed to wind and weather, retain scarcely a trace of the original inscription. Portions of a long past scene may remain on the memory, while other portions of the same scene may be blotted out and lost. I cannot now recall the result attained, or whether it accorded with the fact. There must have been a judgment formed in accordance with this extemporized method of lot, and it must have either agreed or disagreed with the fact ascertained when I reached home; but memory fails to bring up these features of the transaction. One thing I know,—the pure little angel-like pet was all well when I reached its cot and eagerly peered in. A millstone was lifted from my heart,—a millstone that should never have been laid on it.

I must hold the balance even. Now that I have given one case in which I was the innocent sufferer, I shall narrate another in which I was the guilty perpetrator of a cruel act. Here too it is a pigeon that is concerned; but in this

case it was a wild one. It occurred also several years later, when I was older, and ought to have had more sense.

Near the house stood a group of tall old picturesque Scotch firs. Their stems were bare to a great height, of a yellowish white colour, with a glossy surface that glanced in the sunbeams. The tops were dark green, approaching to black, broad and circular like the head of a mushroom. A pair of wood-pigeons had built their nest on the highest pinnacle of one of these trees. The structure was completed, the eggs were laid, and now the mother had betaken herself to the task of hatching. Day after day, night after night, she plied her lonely calling on the top of that tall tree, rocked by the summer wind, and cheered by occasional visits of her mate.

I could not climb the tree. In an evil hour I procured an old musket and charged it with powder and lead. I had no experience, and nobody with me to teach me. If there had been an onlooker, he would probably have taken the weapon from me, lest I should shoot myself. In the enjoyment of the venture, and the eagerness to try whether I could shoot, thoughts of the cruelty of the meditated act seem never to

have occurred, or were smothered as they rose. I crept beneath the tree—dodged about till I found an opening among the branches which gave me an uninterrupted view of the nest, with the head of the pigeon projecting over one side, and the tail over the other. I raised the gun to my shoulder. It is easier for feeble arms to bear its weight when it is placed in a perpendicular, than if it were held in a horizontal position. I shut the left eye, looked with the right along the barrel, until I covered the nest with the muzzle. I then drew the trigger, and the gun went off. Off flew the pigeon from the nest, and fluttered to the ground at my feet. Her wing was broken; but she lived. I rushed forward with great glee to seize my prize. But here ended all my happiness.

Conquerors have been known to weep as they surveyed the battle-field—the scene of their triumph. Such was my experience. The victor became the vanquished. The eye of that gentle, pure, innocent dove, casting reproaches on me for my needless cruelty, glows in my imagination yet, although half a century has intervened.

Retribution came, rapid and severe. I was compelled to complete my own sad work. Fain

would I have set the poor innocent free; but I dared not. I knew full well that to set it free with its broken wing, would only be to prolong its torment. It could never ascend to its nest, or meet its mate again. It would die of starvation, or be torn by a weasel. While my whole soul longed for its life, I was obliged to kill it with my own hands. So, I shut my eyes, and drew its neck. Oh, how its soft, warm, feeble struggles thrilled in my nerves! This last act of mercy to the pigeon was torture to me.

The wood-pigeon (in Scotland the *cushat-doo*) is considerably larger than the domesticated species with which we are most familiar. It is for the most part of a lead colour, with lovely rings of white and black about its neck and breast. Its song, if song it can be called, is peculiar, and very affecting. It is a tenderly modulated and somewhat melancholy *coo*. The voice as well as the appearance of the bird is strongly suggestive of modesty, inoffensiveness, and innocence.

The moment that I was brought face to face with my victim was a crisis in my life. The plaintive, upturned eye smote me to the heart. I would have given all I had in the world to

have it restored in health and happiness to its nest again. Some measure of the feeling, "Never shake thy gory locks at me," ran through my body, and seemed to chill the blood in my veins. But the deed was done, and could not be undone. One reckless, useless act had taken a warm, innocent life away, and left a mate widowed, and a home desolate. I stood and gazed in bitter self-reproach. But the remorse was not altogether lost. The sad lesson came home and bore some fruit. That was the first pigeon I ever shot,—and the last.

Nor did that remorse save the lives of other pigeons merely,—it educated me for all the relations of life. It imbued me with a healthful horror of inflicting pain unnecessarily on any living creature. That moment of concentrated anguish, while I was yet young, has exerted a beneficial influence upon my life. The hearty hatred of myself which I then experienced, has rebounded in a more tender love for all God's creatures. The rebound is equal and opposite to the blow. It is not amiss for a child to be, by the working of internal conviction, induced intensely to loathe himself for his own wrong conduct; for this bent spring will, according to

its strength, work outward and upward in efforts to do good unto others, as opportunities may occur.

I scarcely know any more important item in the training of the young than this. If habits of heedless cruelty to the helpless are allowed to grow into strength in the child, the character of the man is undone. Nor will it suffice that acts of cruelty should be suppressed by authority of parents and masters. The only effectual cure is personal conviction. Although all society should combine against the boy in an effort to repress his faults, the faults will maintain their ground, and come off victorious, unless the boy can be brought to take the side of society against himself. I am quite sure that the silent testimony of my own conscience against my own conduct, when no human being witnessed the act, was more effectual in discharging the element of cruelty from my heart and life, than a thousand lectures against cruelty to animals, duly endowed by the benevolent dead, and annually delivered according to law. Divide and conquer: on other terms you will never conquer. I don't mean that kind of division that sets the young culprit on one side, and the

whole mass of adult humanity on the other. The little fellow is, in these circumstances, more than a match for the whole world. The scold that comes down upon him like the voice of many waters, will go in by the one ear and out by the other. The little fellow, in his own esteem converted into a hero by the very magnitude of the array set against him, will hold his own, and repeat the offence on the first favourable opportunity. I mean rather that kind of division which sets one part of the boy in opposition to the other part—the better against the worse. The division which calls up a tender conscience with its still small voice—a voice backed by the authority of God—to bear witness against the dastardly deed that his own hand has done,—this will conquer, this will win. Give the conscience full play; inform and stimulate it. In all educational efforts, let the leverage employed rest on that pivot planted in the constitution by divine foresight and strength.

The turning-points of life occur mainly in childhood; and they are for the most part hidden in the heart of the child.

It is related of a veteran French soldier of the first empire, that when the surgeons were

probing deeply in his chest in order to extract a ball, thinking that their instruments must be very near the heart, he gaily exclaimed, "Go a little deeper, doctor, and you will find the emperor!" Such was the soldier's love for the great commander. Some objects and events do get place in the heart, as if they were engraved there by a pen of iron and the point of a diamond. Some objects, simple in themselves, getting such a place in youth, powerfully influence the whole current of the life. If I were subjected to an operation similar to that which the French soldier so courageously endured, the doctors, I seem to feel, if they should dig deep enough, would find, in a group of miscellaneous figures, all sharply cut, distinctly preserved, and mightily effective, not an emperor, but a *cushat-doo*.

III. ICE ACCIDENTS.

LESSONS from life, did I say? Alas! the lesson this time is a lesson from death! "Deaths oft" have been reported this season,* and these chiefly of children, from the breaking of ice. As most of these terrible accidents occur in groups, and in one almost unvarying form, it is the duty of parents and teachers, and all who have in any way the charge of children, to instruct and warn them carefully regarding the danger—its causes and its cure.

We shall mention two or three examples, to show that these ice accidents proceed almost always from the same cause, and are repeated from year to year in the same form, because

* This refers to the winter of 1872-73.

the young are not sufficiently instructed and warned.

Two years ago, a case of thrilling interest happened on a lake in the interior of the country, the scene of stirring events in Scottish history. Three sisters were walking about on the narrow belt of firm ice that ran along the shore, followed by a small dog. The little creature, in its sport, ventured too far out, where the ice was thin, and fell through. One of the young ladies ran to its assistance, and fell in. Her sister immediately advanced to the spot, and got hold of her by the hand; but as soon as her weight was increased by the attempt to draw her sister out, the ice under her feet gave way, and she too was thrown into the water. The third and only remaining sister, yielding to the sudden impulse of her love, without counting the cost, approached, in turn, the fatal spot, and sank with the rest. These three daughters of one house were carried home cold, stiff corpses! Who shall tell—who can conceive the agony that their parents endured? Who shall tell what a horror of great darkness came over the light and life of that family in one day?

On the 16th February 1873, on a small lake called Auckienreoch, near Castle-Douglas, six children in succession sank through the ice, and were drowned. One boy, twelve years of age, had ventured too far, and had fallen through the ice. His sister, aged ten, ran to his assistance, and sank beside him. Three other girls, aged respectively thirteen, twelve, and eight, followed, all to save those who had fallen in, and all sank in deep water. Another boy, brother of two sisters who had fallen in, sent by his father to bring the children home, arrived at this moment on the scene. He also rushed to the rescue; but, as soon as he caught his sister's hand, the ice gave way, and he sank with the rest. All were drowned: three of one family, two of another, and one of a third. Of these, five lost their own lives in the effort to save the lives of others.

On the day following, two boys were drowned on the ice in a quarry near Cupar in precisely the same way. One was sliding on too slender ice, and sank; the other, rushing to the rescue, sank beside him. Both were drowned.

Grown people are not so often drowned in this way, because they have more experience,

and take better care. In the northern countries of America and Europe, although there the people go much more upon the ice than we, there are not so many accidents. The reason is, that in these climates the winter is long, and the frost severe. The ice soon grows a foot thick, and there is no thaw till spring. Horses and carts go safely on the ice, and in ordinary circumstances there is no danger. The ice continues very strong till the spring, when it suddenly breaks up altogether.

In our country there is not much frost. And, because those who are fond of skating and sliding do not often enjoy the sport, they are eager to try it whenever it seems possible. Thus they are very often induced to intrust themselves to the ice too soon, lest the thaw should return and disappoint them.

So many precious young lives are lost every winter in our country, that it becomes an urgent duty to make sure that all children shall be clearly taught where the danger lies, and how they may avoid it. Forewarned is forearmed. We think that if it were enjoined on all teachers to give their scholars specific and full lessons on the subject once every year at the approach of

winter, the result would be the preservation of many lives. There would, alas! be no difficulty in explaining and enforcing the warnings by a detailed narrative of fearful examples. The lesson would be listened to with rapt attention, and it could not fail to be effective.


Young people should make it a rule never to venture by themselves on ice over deep water. They should absolutely abstain from stepping on it till they see men of mature age on before them, and farther on than they. Grown people have experience, which the young lack. It should be written on children's minds as a first principle of self-preservation, and of duty to their parents, not to venture on ice where the water is deep, except on the footsteps of men who are of full understanding.

Further, children should be clearly warned that, in case of one falling through, they should not venture near the lip of the broken ice to give assistance with their hands. Even though the ice at the edge could bear your own weight, the moment you begin to draw out the one who is in the water you double the weight on the spot where you stand, and the result will be that you will throw away your own life too.

What then? In such a case, should we render no help to the perishing? Yes, give help. Before you go upon the ice, get some long pole or branch, and keep it near. If an accident occur, stretch it out so that the one who has fallen in may grasp it, and hold on till more assistance arrive. But on no account go forward to help with your hand; for that is only to throw away your own life, and to do no good to your neighbour.

IV.

“THE LORD HATH NEED OF HIM.”

N this lesson I propose, for the sake of variety, to give my younger readers an account of certain incidents that came under my observation about two years ago in Germany. To quench at once all expectations of sensational dangers and hairbreadth escapes by flood and field, I interpose here, by way of preface, the remark, that the interest and usefulness of any observed fact does not depend on its size. If it is correctly observed and described, a small event may be as instructive, and even as attractive, as a large one. The picture of a small hill may please and instruct as much as the picture of a great mountain, if it be as well painted. Here already, before our story begins, we have stumbled upon

a very needful and very precious lesson for the young—this, namely, that they should not wait to begin their exact observation of nature and life till they meet some mighty Alpine range, or some conflict on which the fate of kingdoms may depend. Cultivate the habit of observing accurately the small things on the wayside of ordinary life; so shall you be better prepared to read the lesson of great historical changes when they come. The proverb about the management of money is applicable here: "Take care of the pennies, and the pounds will take care of themselves." He who in youth trains his eye to mark well the features of small objects, will be able when he is old to understand great ones.

After this preface, I hope you are prepared to read and value a story about some very little things.

On my way from the Rhine to Berlin, I desired to visit a Christian family in the town of Barmen, whose friendship I had acquired on a former visit ten years before. Elberfeld and Barmen are a pair of twin manufacturing and mercantile towns, about twenty miles eastward from the Rhine. In the process of their gradual

increase, they have now touched each other; but they maintain their separate local governments and institutions. Having left my luggage at the railway-station, I sallied forth unencumbered through the streets, to seek the house of my friend. As I had given no intimation of my approach, I did not know whether the family might be at home, or whether they remained still in that locality. The door was opened by the head of the house himself, who happened at the moment to be doing something in the lobby. Although both of us were older and older-looking since our former interview, as soon as he saw me he rushed forward and took me all in his arms. The habits of the Germans admit of a much more demonstrative affection than we are accustomed to at home. In a few moments I was seated in the parlour, with the gentleman on the right and the lady on the left, pouring in broadsides of cordial greetings and curious inquiries from both sides at once. Soon, however, the talk on the gentleman's part subsided, giving way to the lady's superior energy. She plunged into some great narrative, in which I ought to have been very much interested; but, alas! I could only take up a word here and there—I

failed to catch the thread of the story. At this she was evidently much vexed: but it was partly her own fault; her utterance was too emotional and too quick. If she had intrusted the matter to her husband, the progress would have been more satisfactory, for he was of a cooler temperament, and pronounced his words more fully. All the world should know and remember the rule, that, when you speak to a foreigner, imperfectly acquainted with the language, you should speak slowly, and enunciate every sound distinctly. Well, all that I could gather, in the first instance, of the good lady's story, was, that it was what I had said when I was in her house ten years before, and that it was all about an ass. I did not remember of having said anything about that animal on the occasion of my former visit, far less anything so pointed and memorable that it should have dwelt in her mind for a period of ten years, and burst forth like a flood as soon as she saw my face again.

Vexed at her want of success in communicating to me her idea, she rose suddenly and left the room. In a few minutes she returned with a glance of triumph in her eye, and a little

framed picture in her hand. Not more confidently did Hamlet reckon that

"The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king,"

than she counted that the picture would supply the missing link between her words and my understanding. And she was right. Taking her seat again beside me, she displayed on her knee a picture, with which we in this country too are very familiar, of the Holy Family going down to Egypt—Mary with the child Jesus riding on an ass, and Joseph walking beside them. Holding this picture before my eyes, and pointing to it at the proper periods, my friend began again her story at the beginning, and I comprehended easily the whole.

The conversation that had passed between us ten years earlier, altogether forgotten by me, but clearly remembered by her, was to this effect:—She asked me if I had any son, either in the ministry of the gospel, or preparing to enter it. I was obliged to reply that those of my sons who had at that date reached the age of discretion in the matter of a profession had both decided to become merchants. She regarded

me with affectionate compassion, and intimated, with humble and devout thankfulness, that she had two sons undergoing preparation for preaching the gospel of Christ. Her husband, aided by her eldest son, was a prosperous manufacturer and merchant; this was matter of quiet contented duty; but the privilege which she enjoyed and exulted in was the consecration of two sons to the ministry of the Word. From one in my position, some reply to her exuberant joyfulness was needed; and it seems that the reply I made at the moment was to this effect: I have indeed no son in the ministry, or on the way to it; but if my sons become disciples of Christ, and also become prosperous merchants, they may serve the Lord and their generation, though not in the office of the ministry. Merchants to whom the Lord has given wealth, and grace too, bear in our day the burden of Christ—bear the weight of his kingdom in the form of contributions, and so bear the kingdom, bear the King onward through the world. Their place is humble, but very needful and very useful, like that of the animal that bore the Redeemer in the weakness of infancy out of the reach of Herod's jealous rage. And it is very remarkable

that in another case in the gospel narrative, where it is expressly said, "The Lord hath need of him," it was of this same animal—this humble burden-bearer—that the word was spoken. So it may yet turn out, through divine grace, that the Lord may have need of my sons too, as the bearers of his burden in the world.

Now, it may seem strange, but it is strictly true, that this dear Christian mother was able to convey all this completely and clearly to my mind *with* the picture, while *without* it she only succeeded in intimating that I had told her something she had not forgotten, and that it was something about an ass. This shows very clearly the great use of pictures in the education of children. No, you say, it has no bearing on the case of children, for it is the experience of one who was not a child, but an old man. There you are mistaken. Your fact is correctly stated, but your inference is an error. My imperfect knowledge of the language placed me precisely in the position of a child. I could comprehend for myself the larger and more substantial parts of the narrative,—all that took the form of large material objects,—but the finer thoughts connected with them escaped me. I could grasp

the body; but the spirit was to me an invisible thing. Now this is, as nearly as may be, the experience of a child, when you attempt to teach him something beyond the simplest forms of thought. He takes up the outward and bodily part of your lesson, but its inner spirit is too ethereal for his faculties. It passes, like the wind, unobserved. It is here that the use of pictures comes in. Pictures are necessary, and should be freely used, in the instruction of the young,—either word-pictures, or paint-pictures. This is the first lesson from the incident of my German experience.

Another lesson, deeper and more important, may also be read on the same page. The Lord Jesus needs burden-bearers for the work of his kingdom. It is quite true that he calls and qualifies ministers as public preachers of the gospel. For this end he chose and trained the twelve; for this end he called Paul, out of due time, at a later date, as a vessel to bear his name through the world. But he does not make all Christians ministers. He needs a much greater number in the ordinary walks of life. When a boy becomes old enough to choose his profession, his friends sometimes put the question, whether

he is willing to become a minister of the gospel. Perhaps the boy shrinks back from that proposal, counting himself unfit to undertake such a task. But the question that should be placed before him is not whether he will be a servant of Christ or a merchant; the question to be decided is whether he may best serve the Lord in the ministry of the gospel, or in some ordinary business. Let the little men all, when they are planning their life-course, count the Lord Jesus their Master; and let them weigh well then in what place or station they may best serve their generation. The Lord hath need of preachers indeed; but he has need also of Christian merchants, manufacturers, craftsmen, farmers—Christians in every class and in every position—to be a salt in the earth. Here am I; send me.

V.

“WHEN I AM WEAK, THEN AM I
STRONG.”



SHALL give here the sequel of the preceding story.

After a very happy sojourn for a day and a night with my friends at Barmen, I started next morning by the express train for Berlin. The carriages were nearly full, and it was difficult to obtain a seat. The guard ran along the train, peeping into each compartment, and at last called out that he had found room for me. To my dismay, it was a single seat in a carriage otherwise filled with ladies, including a mother and two little girls. I thought they looked with an evil eye upon me as an intruder; for the day was warm, and an empty seat must have been welcome to the occupants. I had on

choice, however: in I must go. So I stepped over the extremities of flowing robes, and seated myself modestly in my own place; murmuring an apology to all and sundry, generally for being in the world at all, and particularly for being in that place of it at that particular time.

Nothing worthy of notice happened during the first stages of the journey. At Magdeburg, a large town on the Elbe—a town memorable for the courage of its resistance to the army of Tilly, and the horrible sufferings that were inflicted on it when it fell—the train halted a quarter of an hour. Some went out for refreshments and a breath of air; some remained in the carriages.

When the time for starting again drew near, and most of the passengers had resumed their places, the guard passed along the platform, putting his head into each compartment to make sure that none of his company were missing; for on the Continent generally the guards make it their business to know all their passengers by head-mark, and take an interest in their welfare. I observed he put one short question to each compartment as he passed—"Nobody wanting here?"

When these ominous words were uttered at our door, we were all within except the mother of the two children. On the instant, and without any premonitory symptom, the younger—a girl of about five years of age—burst into a loud, despairing, inarticulate cry. It was a mere *bellow*, with no attempt to cry "Mother!" or anything else—a mighty wail, accompanied with copious streams of tears. The next instant the elder sister caught the infection, and screamed in chorus. Guards outside, onlookers scattered over the platform, and passengers inside,—all vied with each other in efforts to soothe the distracted children.

The children took no notice of the well-meant endeavours. Their thought, I suppose, was—"Miserable comforters are ye all!" for they simply continued with unabated force their great concert of wailing. It was in vain that we assured them the train would not leave till their mother should return: they would put no faith in any testimony. They were determined to walk by sight; faith at that moment was none of their business.

Accordingly, the great cry was kept up without a moment's cessation; till an avenue was

formed in the crowd, and the mother was seen, quickly indeed, but quite composedly, advancing towards our carriage. At this sight the children ceased to cry; ceased so instantaneously and so completely, that the cessation was like that which occurs after a thunder-storm, when the silence seems oppressive by its suddenness and the violence of the contrast. Wanting their mother, the children could not be pacified by all our appliances; with her, they pacified themselves in a moment, without any help from us.

This incident supplied me with food for thought during the next half-hour. I suppose it made its impression all the clearer and deeper upon my mind because I was a stranger in a strange place. Children cry, and cease to cry, many times around us in the bustle of home life, and we take very little note of the trivial circumstance. I was on this occasion favourably situated for making an observation and drawing an inference. I suspect we are in the habit of repressing too severely and too indiscriminately the tendency of young children to cry. This is their only weapon, and their only shield. The power and the tendency have been imparted by Providence, as a protection to those who otherwise

would be entirely helpless. This is the resource of the feeble; and a very effective resource it is.

These two children had no power and no skill; but their cry of distress immediately enlisted in their cause all the skill and power that were congregated in the station of Magdeburg. These two feeble children experienced that day the truth of Paul's great paradox, "When I am weak, then am I strong." They could not arise and bring their mother to the spot; but their cry of weakness set in motion fleetest feet and stronger arms than their own.

It is not only one thing—this resource' of the feeble, the tendency to cry—fearfully made in the human constitution; but there is another thing as wonderfully prepared to meet it,—and that is the thrill of compassion that the cry generates in the heart of adult humanity. These two are made for each other, like the seeing eye and the shining light.

It may be quite true that children carry the matter to excess. Most of them wield their weapon on slight occasions and with troublesome frequency. But even the excess should be gently checked. We should remember that though the injury they apprehend seem small to us, it may

be great in their sight. We should also consider that to cry is their only resource when they apprehend danger. I agree that they should be early taught and trained to be manful—to be watchful not to give their seniors needless trouble; but in so training little ones, we ought to be careful not to repress them too much. We must not dam up human nature. It would be cruel to deprive the little ones of the only weapon they can wield.

The lesson I learned from my observation was, to bear with patience the cry of frightened children, even when I think it might have been spared, because I see it is the defence from danger which our common Father has thrown around their tender heads.

I do not think my lesson is out of place here, although I am speaking expressly to the young. None need this lesson more. I do not expect very young children to take an interest in these dissertations. I address the young who have attained the age of understanding; and if I am not greatly mistaken, no class needs warning and instruction as to the treatment of little ones so much as the elder children of the same family. From lack of experience, the brothers and sisters

who have grown past the age of shedding tears and screaming over every small annoyance, are most apt to treat harshly those smaller specimens of humanity who have not yet attained that emancipation. Parents, and other persons advanced in life, have had time and opportunity to take all the circumstances into consideration, and so they can make allowance for the weakness of childhood; but your manful boy of fifteen, and the girl of similar standing, having just escaped from the weaknesses of childhood, have generally very little tenderness for those who are still in the infant department.

So, addressing the youth in behalf of the children, we say, Manifest your manhood by a tender consideration for the weakness that you have now shaken off for ever. Let big boys be assured that it is the safe side to err on, even though they should err—to treat the younger children with studied and patient tenderness.

Some people who hold their heads higher than little children, have experienced the power of tears and crying in securing deliverance from great dangers. David the king was not ashamed to own this: "My foes shall when I cry turn back" (Ps. lvi. 9). Strange method for a king

to adopt, in order to defeat his enemies! And David was not a coward: he was a man of war from his youth; he was a skilful and bold soldier, full of resources and full of courage. Just think of it!—a king at the head of his host betaking himself to weeping instead of fighting when the ranks of the enemy come in sight!

Yet so it was. As a little child, this warrior-king cried to his Father in heaven with tears; and his enemies were driven before him like smoke before the wind. And this kind of weeping yet "is mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force;" but the violence to which the kingdom, to which the King, yields, is the strong crying and tears of those who have the disposition and take the place of "dear children."

My journey to the Prussian capital, however, is not yet completed. A fragment of my story still remains, and it concerns these same two children.

It was a day's journey. I was a lonely stranger. I was enduring the penance of silent confinement—a penance that even criminals cannot long endure. As the afternoon wore on, my

desire to say something to somebody increased until it became like a thirst. I was on the point of bursting. But there were none but ladies in the carriage. They seemed dignified and distant: I had no right to address them, and they did not seem inclined to say anything to me.

In my extremity, the children came to the rescue; they became welcome mediators. As I sat in solitude, thinking of home, I pulled out a photograph group of my own family which I carried in my pocket-book, by way of giving form to my meditations. On this picture I was gazing—nursing, I suspect, instead of quenching, the home-sickness that was gathering about my heart—when one of the children, standing on the seat, and bending over behind her mother, caught sight of my group. Nothing loath, I turned it slightly towards her, that she might obtain a fuller view. Her eyes brightened, and a smile of kindness was vouchsafed to me.

Thus encouraged, I placed the picture bodily in her hands. She carried it off, and showed it to her sister. The mother looked at it over the children's shoulders. Meanwhile the children glanced alternately at the photograph and at me. You could perceive in their knowing looks and

whispers that they had recognized me as the central figure of the group. They were amused with the essential identity and circumstantial contrast; for, sure enough, the rough and dusty traveller could not at first sight be identified with the figure fresh from the toilet at home, who had been posed by the photographer in his studio in the city of Edinburgh.

The ladies on the opposite seat became interested at this stage; and, allowing curiosity to overcome their stateliness, they begged the children for a sight of the group. From them it passed to their nearest neighbours, till it had gone the round of the carriage. The effect was magical. The ice was broken—I was introduced. I was admitted into society on the evidence which the picture afforded that the uncombed wanderer was, when at home, the head of a clean and comfortable family. The ladies laughed heartily at my blunders in attempting to speak their language, but drank in all the time the useful information that I was able to convey in answer to their questions about Scotland and its romantic capital.

The latter portion of our journey was as remarkable for liveliness as the earlier portion had

been for dulness. The change was all due to the little children. "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." In little ones, of course, nature appears less tinged with the artificiality of mature life; and nature in that form became interpreter between people of different lineage and tongue. When two drops of dew lie near each other, but haughtily separate, on a cabbage leaf, a child touches their edge with a straw, and forthwith they roll into one. So did childhood mediate that day between my fellow-travellers and me.

God bless the little ones! We could not want them. Many times they come in as a soft padding between two hard and threatening pieces of adult life, and prevent a hostile collision. Blessed are these little peacemakers!

VI.

WE DON'T NEED PAPA.

ABOUT fourteen years ago, in the great city of Glasgow, lived Mr. Tonar, with his wife and six children. The ages of the children ranged from two to thirteen years. The two elder were well advanced with their education, and had become, in some measure, companions to their parents, entering with some degree of intelligence and sympathy into all the family plans and prospects.

It was a new experience and a great delight to the parents, when the elder children became capable of comprehending, to some extent, the measures adopted for the welfare of the family. They accordingly made companions and, as it were, counsellors of those that had, to this extent, attained the years of discretion. The children,

on their part, made their parents their chief confidants and friends.

Mr. Tonar's business made it necessary for him to leave home frequently for two or three days at a time. One season these journeys had occurred more frequently than usual, and had also been more prolonged. The elder children missed their father's company, and longed for his return. Coming home from school one afternoon, they found him in the lobby with great-coat on, and travelling-bag packed up, and all in readiness for another journey. Disappointed and displeased, they exclaimed with one voice, in a tone of complaint, "O papa! you are always going away."

A little one of four, who had not been at school, and had come into the lobby to see what was going on, hearing her sisters' exclamation, and by no means sympathizing with it, answered in accents of decided self-satisfaction and independence,—“What do you complain about? We don't want papa!”

She had observed—for even at that tender age children begin to lay things together, and to reason vigorously from such premises as they have—that everything went on very well in the

absence of her father. She remembered that the milk and the bread were forthcoming as regularly and as plentifully when he was away as when he was at home. Warm clothes were provided; and if anything gave way, it was as promptly mended as if her father had been close at hand.

Nay, even while he was in the house she never saw him carrying home the groceries, or cooking the dinner, or washing the clothes. And, accordingly, she thought she was not indebted to him for any of her comforts. For that part of it, if she had mother, and Betty, and her eldest sister, she thought she might get along as well without papa as with him.

The elder children knew better. They were aware that although their father's hand was not seen providing and preparing the daily meals, and buying and making the garments, yet he gained and gave all. Although the servants of the house brought home the provisions, and cooked them, and carried them up, yet their father provided and paid for all;—that, without their father, they could not obtain home, and food, and clothes, and books.

They had sufficient intelligence and experience

to know that they owed all to their father, although they did not see his hand providing anything. Although Betty brought in the rolls and spread the breakfast, and put on their clothes, they owed breakfast, and clothes, and Betty too, to their father. They loved him accordingly, and were happy in his company, and were sorry to see him going away.

In defence of the little one, however, let me say, that she was not lacking in love to her father. It was in knowledge, and not in affection, that her defect lay. Her ignorance, too, was owing to her infancy. She does not now, at the age of eighteen, entertain the opinion which she expressed at the age of four. She knows now that she needs papa; and does *not* know how she could do without him in the world. But, not knowing how it will be done, she yet believes that our Father in heaven will provide. But in the meantime, when childhood is past, that childish thing has passed away with it, and no member of the family is more deeply convinced of papa's usefulness, or clings more fondly to his neck when he is setting out on a journey.

It would appear that mankind at large are

divided, like that family, into two sections—the intelligent and the unintelligent. One portion—not indeed the youngest, but the most presumptuous, seeing no hand of God stretched down from the sky to lay our bread upon our table—say they have no need of God. The laws of nature are enough for them. By aid of these laws they will help themselves. Does not the field produce our food, and the air supply our breath, and the sun give us light; and why should we pray to God for these things? Oh! when will these children learn that every “good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights!”

117
w that
gh they
ing. Al
spread
aes, they
ty too, t
ordingly,
l were so
In defence
y, that
ther. It
on, that
was owin
t the a
which s
knows
know
world.
he y
rovi
s pa
a
on



and, the
about the
piece
point
the an
sure of the
the after the
the, to the and the

FOWLER'S SNARE.

The failure happened o


oyed was a little iron engine
when touched, made a pad
suddenly close upon the rabbit
ny the creature was imprisoned
re legs broken, but left alive
my snare in the morning, to
one of triumph, when at a distance
d the prisoner struggling in vain.

As I drew near the struggling
captive sat still and gazed on me
liquid, innocent, sad eye was
as I approached. It seemed to
upbraided me—it pleaded for
was caught. I felt myself a

thing now was, that it was not
he captive free; and yet I could
necessity to my victim in order
With its broken legs, I knew
an additional cruelty to let it
ad no means of making it under-
obliged to take its life. I con-
reature conquered me. I could
ok: I turned my face the other

VII.

IT IS TRUTH THAT SAVES.

N tracing these lessons for the benefit of my young readers, my occupation, I find, is very like that of the geologists. The crust of the earth into which the geologists dig in search of fossils, and the memory into which I dive for past facts and feelings, are as like each other as any two things can be. The one is material, and the other mental; but there the diversity ceases. In all other points the two spheres and the two operations are precisely the same.

Let us pause a moment and take note of this interesting analogy. The episode will impart some measure of variety to our speculations. The two spheres are similar, in that the more ancient forms and facts are generally better pre-

served than the more recent. In the strata of the earth, the plants and animals that have been extinct for ages are, as a general rule, much more completely preserved than specimens of a later age. While every bone and muscle of the creatures that walked the earth or swam the sea before man came upon the scene can be seen entire, the creatures that have lately passed away have left no trace behind.

This is similar to our experience in the faculty of memory. Those who have lived long, find that the events which happened in their youth can be much more perfectly recalled than those which are only a few years old. Accordingly, for my own part, when I sally forth to search the records of memory, as the geologist goes, hammer in hand, to the hills or quarries, I prefer to go down to the more ancient specimens. Those that have lain longest in their bed are best kept. The type of those pages that were printed first is larger and clearer; accordingly, I like best to read my lesson from the beginning of the book.

Long, long ago I had occasion to attend a large social meeting in a manufacturing village on the evening of the New-Year's Day. It was

a feast prepared for the working-people in the interests of sobriety, at a period when such evening parties were not so common as they are now. The hall was brightly illuminated and decorated; the provisions were good and abundant; the speeches and songs were instructive and exhilarating; and the company, old and young, male and female, were full of happiness.

As I had a walk of three or four miles before me, I retired some time before the assembly broke up. After leaving the hall, I experienced some difficulty in steering my way past the separate and irregularly-placed structures connected with a large calico-printing establishment. The night was not very dark; but as my eyes had accommodated themselves to a glare of gas within the hall, the effect of the change was equivalent to darkness, as far as I was concerned.

I got upon a straight dry path at last, but it was very rough, and caused me frequent stumbles. Casting about for some smoother footing, I observed that a low grassy wall or ridge, about eighteen inches in height, ran along one side of the path, separating it, as I supposed, from a broader and better road. On the other

side of that diminutive ridge the way seemed very inviting: it was level and smooth, and in the dim starlight almost glittering in its smoothness. Why should I stumble on a rough place, while a pleasant path lay invitingly near me? Without further thought, I made a hearty leap over the grassy ridge on my right; but instead of standing on a beaten footpath, as I had expected, I found myself up to the neck in water.

It was a reservoir for the use of the factory. Its shining surface in the defective light had deceived me. I scrambled out again, shook myself like a Newfoundland dog, and trudged homeward, a cooler and a wiser man. At the price of a cold ducking, I bought a little wisdom that night, and it has turned out a good investment. It is nearly forty years ago, and I have not once leaped into a sheet of water with my clothes on since.

It may not be amiss to give here a parallel case from more recent experience, that out of the mouth of two witnesses the lesson may be better confirmed.

A boy from the country was invited to spend some days with a family who occupied a fine villa in the outskirts of Edinburgh. The

drawing-room of the house is on the ground-floor, and the windows look out on a lawn studded with flower-plots. The stranger, standing in the drawing-room alone, suddenly observed some of his companions on the lawn, and made a bound to join them. The windows were filled with very large sheets of plate-glass, so perfect that he thought the space was vacant. Judging, by the absence of all visible lines or wrinkles, that nothing harder than pure atmospheric air intervened between him and his play-fellows, he made a great leap to join them. The glass was broken to shivers, and the boy was severely wounded. Had one of the fragments gone a little deeper, or struck on another spot, he would have been killed. His sincere belief that no resisting medium stood before him, did not in any measure shield him from the consequences of his mistake. He acted on a false judgment, and suffered accordingly.

Can we obtain from these incidents any lesson that may repay us for our labour? We may. This simple fact, rightly applied, might demolish a good deal of the philosophy that is fashionable in some quarters at the present day. It is a fond conceit of certain speculative minds,

that it matters not to a man what his belief may be, provided he be sincere. Now, if this be a wrong principle, it is of importance to expose it, for a good many people entertain it. They don't like doctrines such as the Bible lays down. They don't like to be told that their acceptance with God and their salvation depend on certain doctrines being received and professed. They say, We can't help our belief; and if we be sincere in holding it, we shall not be punished for it, even although it should turn out to be mistaken.

One fact is stronger than ten thousand fancies. On that cold winter night long ago, I, for one, learned that a man suffers from an erroneous opinion, although he hold it sincerely. I was most completely sincere in my opinion that I should obtain a much more pleasant path on the other side of the grassy ridge; but my sincerity did not protect me from a ducking. If the water had been deeper, and I unable to swim, my sincerity would not have kept me from drowning.

One thing would have kept me right. If, distrusting appearances, in the absence of guiding light, I had knelt down, and stretched my

hand over, and touched the supposed smooth hard footpath, I should have discovered that it was water, and would not have leaped into it. My opinion—the result, in that case, of honest, painstaking inquiry—would have been a correct opinion, and the soundness of my belief would have done for me what my sincerity in error could by no means do: it would have saved me from punishment.

So, you see, we are reading a useful lesson from the fossil fact found in the lower folds of memory. In my case there was an erroneous judgment; it was sincere, and yet I was punished for it. The judgment was erroneous, because it was rashly formed without due inquiry. I did not examine the circumstances; I did not *feel* my way. I made a leap in the dark, and I paid for it.

It was a small thing, indeed; but in this life we are constantly exercised in small things, that in these we may discover dangers, and learn to walk wisely in great things. The same material law that controls a drop, controls also the ocean. The Creator of all things does not apply one law to a small quantity, and a different law to a large quantity. In the same

manner, his moral law is one, and ranges over all. If I rashly and through prejudice or indolence form an erroneous judgment on a small matter, I suffer for it. What right have I to think that the rule of Divine Providence will be reversed when it deals with great matters!

If, through some dimness in the eyes of the soul, caused by looking too long and too intently on the hot garish glare of worldly pleasures and profits, a man miss the way of life, made known in the gospel, and plunge over the lip of life with a lie in his right hand, what right has he to expect that it will be well with him on the other side?

No. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "Seek, and ye shall find." "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." "I am the light of the world." "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

VIII.

AFRAID IN THE DARK.



VERY large proportion of the records which my memory contains,—the older writings that occupy the lower strata of that most wonderful of all fossiliferous rocks,—is connected with my father. This is abundantly accounted for by two facts of my history. I was the youngest child of the family; and I never saw my mother. Deprived of a mother at my very entrance into life, I *needed* and *received* more of my father's care than any of the rest. Not only did he set me right in the grand appeal court in the evening from all the wrongs of the day, but the knowledge that his protection was strong and sure deterred the elder children from tyrannizing over me during the day while he was absent. My father was my

chief companion in those days, and I suppose I was his. I loved him because he was good to me; and he loved me, even when I did not deserve his love, because I was his own.

From this close and constant intercourse sprang many events and adventures that have indelibly imprinted themselves in the deepest layers of my memory. Nor are the records less legible because they are old. The lines stand out more sharply articulate than those that yesterday's history laid on.

One of these antiques I shall to-day dig up from its deep bed, that my young readers may exercise their minds in deciphering the legend. And if they find the lesson useful, there are many more where it came from.

My story, however, must be prefaced by a humiliating confession,—I was very much afraid in the dark. I could not clearly explain the objects of my dread. I did not fully define to myself what sort of creatures I expected to encounter, but I entertained a very strong and general belief that if I were alone in the darkness for one moment, I should be swallowed up by some horrible creature lying in wait for that end. I suppose the germ of the cowardice lay

deep in my own nature ; but I know that older children and neighbours did not make any judicious efforts, or any efforts at all, to wean me from my foolish fears. If the truth must be confessed, they rather stimulated my apprehensions, in order to get amusement for themselves.

Be that as it may, however, the sad fact remains sure, that the joy of my childhood was a good deal shaded by an indefinite apprehension of all evil, if I should by any chance be exposed in darkness.

One afternoon in spring, my father had occasion to visit one of his neighbours about a mile distant from our house, and he took me with him, as usual. Lively conversation consumed the time, and beguiled both host and visitor. It was late ere we rose to depart. The night was very dark, but mild and still. The greater part of our way home lay through a thick wood. Even in daylight the shade on that familiar footpath lay very deep ; but on that night it was a darkness that might be felt. If any object could be seen at all, it was the form of the tall trees, with their shaggy heads leaning against the dim sky.

On that journey I was conscious of an experi-

ence so strange and new that it arrested the attention even of a little child, and set his little mind to work to discover, if possible, its causes. My experience was this: I was out in the dark, with all the aggravations of a forest, affording shelter to the monsters who were certainly lurking there, ready to devour me; and yet *I was not afraid*. The same consciousness that at other times observed the terror now took note of its absence. There I was, treading firmly the footpath that threaded through the thickets—these thickets hanging dense overhead—and my heart was quite at ease. There was no trembling in my limbs, no loud throbbing in my breast. I was completely at ease, and enjoyed the scene.

What was the reason of this great change? It is not only now that I suggest the question: The question suggested itself to the philosopher in miniature then and there; then and there, too, the answer came, quick and clear. *My father holds my hand, and I hold his*. This made all the difference. This one fact was sufficient to “cast out fear;” and fear accordingly was cast out. I was very happy; and the happiness was enhanced by the contrast, which

I was able even then to set before my mind, with what my condition would have been if I had been alone.

My readers have now got my story ; and they comprehend it all. The glass that I have set up before them is transparent enough, and they see through it. But I shall now do with my story what artisans sometimes do with a sheet of glass. They take the glass that is transparent (a glass for seeing through), and convert it into a mirror (a glass for seeing something else in). Now, let my story be so transformed, and let it reflect its meaning like a parable.

We have had fathers of our flesh whom we trusted, and their presence took away all the fears that swarmed in the darkness ; how much rather should we approach and trust the Father of our spirits, and so be delivered from the fear that hath torment ? There are a good many thickets on the way of life, and through some of these we may need to walk in the night. It is wise to provide. We do not need to provide a Father or his love. That is all provided, and ready, and pressed on our acceptance. We may read the Father's love in the gift of his Son. This gift is the outstretching of his hand to us

—the hand that is “mighty to save.” Take hold of it. It will please him to feel your feeble grasp. He counts it more blessed to give freedom from fear than we to receive it.

Alas! though we trust a father of the flesh, we distrust and misjudge our Father in heaven. It is a cruel injustice to him when we count his presence a shadow that quenches the heart’s joy. The spirit of the lines,—

“ God is near thee,
Therefore cheer thee,
Sad soul,”—

is much needed, and very precious. Oh, to be “in with God,” as really and fully as I was in with my father that night! The way is open; Christ is the way. He is our peace. To be reconciled, to trust him, to hold his hand, is to be free from danger, and above fear.

A darker passage lies before us than the wood through which I passed that night “held by a father’s hand”—that valley of the shadow of death. There is no way round about it; there is no high level bridge over it. Into it all must step; but safety in the great thing comes as safety in the little thing came to a child: “*I will not fear, FOR THOU ART WITH ME*” (Ps. xxiii.).

IX.

A FRIEND SHUT OUT.

LONG ago, in the city of Glasgow, and in a crowded district near the harbour, I discovered a solitary widow, occupying a single room, very well conducted, but very ill off. Having made myself acquainted with her history and her circumstances, I soon found the means of relieving her wants.

It is worth while to say here in passing, that it is not difficult to relieve the sober and industrious poor. It is the poverty connected with intemperance that is incurable. Pauperism caused by drink is not only the greatest in amount, but it is of the worst kind. Here are two vessels, one much larger than the other, and both empty. It is your desire and your duty to fill both with pure water. But on looking more narrowly you

discover that the smaller vessel, though empty, is water-tight; while the larger, in addition to being empty, is full of holes in the bottom. The smaller you can easily fill; but to fill the other is impossible. Such is the difference between the poverty which comes upon sober people, through accidental circumstances, and the poverty caused by drink. You can help the one kind, but you can do no good to the other, although you had all the wealth of the city at your command.

I soon found a friend with a full purse and a willing heart, who gave me all I needed for my poor widow. He thanked me for supplying him with the opportunity of doing good. With the money in my pocket, I sallied forth joyfully to find the poor woman and relieve her distress. Arrived at her door, on the top of a rickety stair, I knocked for admission: no answer; I knocked again; knocked a third time, loud and long; receiving no answer, I retraced my steps.

Next day I found means of conveying a message, requesting her to call on me. As soon as she entered I accosted her: Mrs. B., I was at your house yesterday with money sufficient to

pay your debt, and to buy necessary food and clothing, but you must have been from home, for the door was locked and I could not get in.

A look of surprise came over her countenance, while she answered, "No, sir; I was in the house all day yesterday. I never gaed out." You must have been asleep, then, for I knocked three times—the last time very loudly—and got no answer. "Ah, sir," said the poor woman, the tears coming fast to her eyes, "I see how it is: I heard the knockin', but thought it was the man come for the rent; and as I had no money, I sat still and held in my breath." The transaction was soon over: the money was paid, and the widow, with a lightened heart, was out of sight and on her way to a happier home.

But out of sight, she was not out of mind for me. The widow and her case came up before me more vividly than ever. Like the experiences of Israel in the wilderness, although a real history enacted before my eyes, it was also an allegory, clearly representing great spiritual facts. In its character of allegory it became larger and more distinct than in its character of remembered facts. I could not have invented an analogy so well fitted to show how human hearts, through

a deep mistake, refuse to open and let the Saviour in.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock!" Such is the attitude and the appeal of the Lord Jesus. Reader, you have heard the knocking, and kept the door shut. Why? for never such loving visitor sought entrance into a human home. He comes to seek and to save. He comes to give freely the payment of all your soul's debt, and a title to the kingdom.

All true; and perhaps the reader knows that now. But at first you feared him, as the widow feared me, under a mistake. You looked upon that august visitor as a righteous Judge, demanding the payment of an immeasurable debt, while you had nothing to give. You thought he had come to throw you into prison till you should pay the uttermost farthing. You shuddered, and kept silence, and kept the door of your heart shut against him. At the same time you made a secret resolution to pay him all some day, and so be delivered from an intolerable bondage. You would repent, and break off your sin, and when you should be somewhat more worthy you would open to receive him.

That is, in your ignorance you turned the

gospel upside down. Christ came to bestow pardon, and you supposed he had come to exact the debt. Christ is the Saviour; and you supposed that you must save yourself first, and then he would receive you. You supposed that he came to receive saints; whereas he came to receive sinners. You supposed that by keeping back—dreading Christ instead of trusting him—you would through time grow worthy of him; whereas the longer you remain out of him the more unworthy you will grow. You thought the branch, out of the vine, should remain separate until it should by great exertion become fruitful, and then the vine would receive it; whereas the longer it remains out of the vine the more it withers, and grows fit for the burning.

The divine Redeemer stands at the door and knocks. He has come not to demand anything from you, but to bestow all upon you. He exacts nothing, and gives all. Your part is not to give to him, but to receive from him. He will pay your debt, and make you rich. It is not that you first cease to be a sinner, and so be worthy of his favour as a saint. He bestows his pardon on you, a sinner, and then you love him because he first loved you.

A CLEAN TONGUE.

AT the close of an evangelistic meeting, in a country-town, I was requested to speak with a young man who remained behind under spiritual anxiety. He was a working-man, well-dressed, with a very grave and yet sweet expression. He was not well informed, but eager to get instruction. He told me that he had been brought under conviction at an evangelistic meeting about a week before. His terror had been great on the first discovery of his sin ; but as glimpses of the gospel gradually opened to his mind, the fear was diminishing and hope beginning to dawn in his heart.

His words were few, and his intelligence defective. To a question regarding the effects of his new-born spiritual earnestness upon his life,

he replied, with much simplicity, "My tongue is cleaner now, sir." Explanations followed; from which I learned that he had been given to the use of vile and profane language. This seemed to have been the besetting sin that bulked largest in his view when the spiritual eye began to open. He saw the abomination; and with the instinct of the new birth, although yet only a babe, he began to throw it off.

The expression arrested me. How close the likeness here between soul and body, both in disease and in health! Next after the condition of the pulse, it is the state of the tongue that the physician desires to know, as an index of the patient's health. Foulness of the tongue is not the disease, but it is an effect which the disease produces, and so becomes a symptom of the disease. When the ailment is cured, the coating of uncleanness disappears from the tongue, and the organ resumes its pure natural colour.

The moral foulness of the tongue that indicates spiritual disease in the heart is very loathsome and very rife. Wherever boys are left without careful parental training, they seem to glide into profanity as if by a law of gravity. The peculiar aggravation adheres to this sin, that it defiles

all on whom it falls. Sounds reach ears as light reaches eyes: one cannot escape. While you are walking along the street on your lawful business, these sounds fall on your ears; these blasphemous thoughts are thereby conveyed to your mind—engraved, it may be, on your memory, so that you cannot wash them off.

When the physician finds the tongue of his patient foul, he does not occupy himself with efforts to scrape the coating off; he administers remedies with the view of reaching and removing the malady that is coursing through the system with the life-blood. If he succeed in subduing the fever that throbs in the heart, the incrustations will of their own accord quickly drop off from the tongue.

This method holds good also in the spiritual disease: we must reach the root. The swearer cannot cast off his profanity, and remain otherwise as he was. When he gets a new heart, the lips will be found renewed also. When he comes to Christ for pardon of his sin, then will he begin to cease from sinning. It is a secret of the Lord—revealed to them that fear him, but concealed from others—that a man does not really loathe and dread his sin until it is forgiven. It

is when he knows that it shall not condemn him that he puts it away. He never really learns to hate it till he knows that it has crucified Christ.

The Apostle Peter writes a list of impurities that disciples should cast away from their hearts and their lips: "All malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking." But he does not expect that these can be shaken off except by the power of God's forgiving love already experienced; for he says, Lay these aside, "if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."

When a woman, notorious for her vice, was brought before Jesus, he first relieved her from condemnation, removed her guilt by a divine forgiving power, and then charged her to sin no more. He trusted to his own pardon, freely bestowed, as a force in the forgiven sinner's heart to work outward upon her life and put away the evil of her ways.

You turn the gospel upside down, when you tell a wicked person to get quit of his wickedness first by his own effort, in order that thereby he may obtain the favour of God. Offer him, as Jesus offered, the favour of God and the free

forgiveness; and that favour accepted will be a power in the believer's heart that will drive the wickedness out of his members. In matters of the soul, as in matters of the body, a heart healed of its disease will soon show its effects in a clean tongue.

XI.

THE FOWLER'S SNARE.

WHEN I was a boy I sometimes snared rabbits. I never practised the art on a large scale, or at a distance from our own door. It was with me a matter of the simplest self-defence. In the evening the rabbits issued from the cover of the neighbouring woods, and fed on the green corn in my father's field, within a stone-throw of the house. If we had let them alone, they would have devoured all, and have left us empty in harvest.

It became necessary, however, to resort to other methods for relief from these depredators. My efforts wrought no deliverance: very soon after they began they were abruptly brought to a close. I failed, not for want of skill, but for

want of courage. The failure happened on this wise.

The trap employed was a little iron engine, in which a spring, when touched, made a pair of semicircular jaws suddenly close upon the rabbit's feet. In this way the creature was imprisoned with one or more legs broken, but left alive. When I visited my snare in the morning, the first thought was one of triumph, when at a distance I perceived the prisoner struggling in vain to release itself. As I drew near the struggle ceased. The captive sat still and gazed on me. The large, soft, liquid, innocent, sad eye was fixed on my face as I approached. It seemed to speak: it gently upbraided me—it pleaded for pity. I in turn was caught. I felt myself a culprit.

The saddest thing now was, that it was not possible to set the captive free; and yet I could not explain that necessity to my victim in order to justify myself. With its broken legs, I knew that it would be an additional cruelty to let it go; and yet I had no means of making it understand that I was obliged to take its life. I confess that feeble creature conquered me. I could not meet its look: I turned my face the other

way, walked backward, felt for the rabbit, and quickly strangled it. I could bear to look upon it when at length it was still.

Two or three times, on two or three successive days, this process was repeated. But the operation could not be continued—it was too much for me: the tender pleading looks of the helpless victims were grinding my heart away. I gave in, and gave up. “The rabbits may have all the corn to themselves for me; I cannot stand it.”

These poor innocent, gentle prisoners have imprinted themselves upon me in lines that time cannot efface. Nearly half a century has elapsed since last I looked upon a living crippled rabbit in a snare; and yet I have no difficulty in calling up the scene, with all its incidents.

In later years, however, I have frequently looked upon its like; magnified a thousandfold in the depth of its lines and the darkness of its colouring—inconceivably magnified in its power to pierce and rend one's soul. The parallel which now brings up that terror of my more tender years is a human captive, snared and crippled, and drawn to inevitable death. The fowler's snare in which the immortal has been taken is

strong drink. He has fatuously wandered into the pit, against many clear, faithful warnings. Others have fallen, indeed ; but he is manly—he knows when he has enough. “Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?” He can take a glass, and he can want it ; he will not make a child of himself by abstaining altogether.

By-and-by one-half of his boasted power forsakes him. He can take the glass still ; but now he *cannot* or *will not* want it. He has taken it so often and so freely that at length it has taken him, and holds him as fast as my little iron engine held the rabbit in its jaws. It is the most horrible of all sights which meet our view in life. The hand that once was strong and skilful shakes like an aspen leaf in the wind ; the eye that once was strong in its glance like an eagle's now waters with childish, blubbing tears ; the steps that once seemed to shake the ground totter now in the imbecility of premature age.

The lips will readily express a resolution, accompanied by the most solemn vows, never to touch or taste the enemy again ; yet you know, as you hear the inebriate, that his vow will be

kept only till he get another supply of drink into his hands. Manliness and self-respect, and honour and truth, are all burned out of him : there remains but a drivelling drunkard. These ensnared and ruined captives are many—they are legion. Men and women, young and old, rich and poor, walk into the snare, and its horrible serrated jaws spring and close upon them.

The sight is more than I am able to look upon ; and yet I am compelled to look upon it from day to day. I suppose I could bear the sight of a dumb creature suffering now ; for ah ! the more horrible visions that abound must in time sear the tender parts of one's nature. It is a beautiful world that is spread out beneath our feet, and a beautiful sky that is hung above our heads ; but the air seems heavy with the evil odour of these open sepulchres that stud the surface of the landscape. These defiling spots lie thick on the edge of our life-path : we cannot travel far without stumbling over one of them.

Work, and never despair, all ye whom Christ has made free—work for the deliverance of the captives. And hope, all ye that are bought with a price ; for into the home of many mansions

nothing shall enter that defileth. No inebriate will ever be seen stumbling on the glassy streets of the New Jerusalem.

Why exhibit such a repulsive picture, especially to the young? Because, after their feet are in the snare, the warning comes too late.

COST A HUNDRED POUNDS.



ONE day,—a memorable day in my life, as it turned out,—when I was about ten years of age, my father sent me into a field to do some work for him. What the particular work was I do not remember, for a greater thing sprang up and overshadowed it. I was not willing to go; but I did not, dared not refuse. I went to the spot, and remained there a while, handling the appropriate tool, and doing after a fashion the very thing that my father had commanded me to do. But I made no speed; my heart was not in the business, and therefore my hands made very little progress. It was, in short, little better than a sham to save appearances. I lacked courage to say, “I will not;” but, for want of will, I failed to execute the task.

Observing from a distance how matters stood, my father called me to his side. I knew that he was dissatisfied, and I expected punishment, or at least a severe reproof. As I approached him I observed that there was no anger in his face. There was rather an expression of tenderness, mingled with sadness. He laid his hand gently on my shoulder, and looking in my face, asked if I knew or could guess how much money I had cost him since I had come into the world under his care? I had never thought of the subject, and could not venture to name a sum. He then informed me that he had been making a calculation, and found that he had paid in all on my account fully a hundred pounds. Some quiet suggestion followed, to the effect that it would be becoming in me to endeavour to make some return to him for his outlay; but he did not press the matter much at the time.

Pressure was not needed. The sum pressed and printed itself into me by its own weight. I despair of being able to convey to my readers of this generation a fair idea of the apparent magnitude of that orb in my eye—that great shining globe of gold—one hundred pounds! Two thoughts took possession of me: first, no

doubt of my father's truthfulness ever crossed my mind; I received the information with absolute fulness of faith: yet, second, the sum seemed fabulous in its vastness. It seemed to pass all understanding that I had as yet attained.

The result was a deep conviction at once of my father's generosity and my own ingratitude. It had more effect in getting obedience out of me, than any quantity of thrashing could have drawn. The lesson lasted long, too. Its power is not exhausted yet. It supplies me with a motive to duty, even unto old age.

My father never learned from my lips how much effect his lesson had produced, but probably he saw in my behaviour some fruit springing from the seed he had so skilfully planted. It was one of the elements that contributed to a great friendship and confidence between my father and me in the subsequent stages of my youth. The circumstances of being the youngest child, and motherless, no doubt gave scope for the formation and exercise of such a friendship. He afforded me the tenderness of a mother, as well as the strength of a father's protecting arm. He was my confidant, and I was his.

If this page fall under the eye of a parent, he may perhaps gather a useful hint from the simple story that it tells. I, for one, would not banish the rod from the discipline of the family; I would retain the traditionary implement, whether it should be embodied in birch or leather; but I would keep it in the background. Let all the little commonwealth know that it is a substance, and not a shadow; but, "if it be possible, as much as in you lieth" let its shadow thrown forward accomplish the work, and do not bring itself often or lightly into the foreground. Let it only be known and felt in the circle that the paternal or maternal command must be obeyed, and that the stern compulsitor will certainly in the last resource be called in. Then the great bulk of the government and training from day to day, and from year to year, will be easier and better done by the agency of such moral strokes as my father applied to me when he saw me ungratefully indolent.

A boy is more of a rational animal than most old people give him credit for. He can lay two things together with considerable skill, especially where the instrument of correction employed is a twofold cord of truth and tenderness. This

whip, I have observed, brings the boy to your bosom ; but frequent lashes of one plaited of the two cords of truth and anger tend to drive him away.

But the direct lesson from my story is addressed to boys. They often come to great loss by a mistaken estimate of their father's love. They look to the sterner side, that is often and necessarily drawn out to correct their faults, and fail to sound the depths of love that lie beneath these needful frowns. It is not enough for children to obey the spoken commands of their parents. They should anticipate their wishes, and strive to please them.

On another point young people form an erroneous judgment. They are apt to think that any service they can render is not of much importance. They can perceive that what the parents do themselves, or get done by servants, is far greater than any small help that can be rendered by a child's hand ; but it is a great and disastrous mistake to measure a parent's satisfaction by the quantity of the service done. The smallest act will fill a parent's heart with joy when he sees it done by his own child, and feels that it is prompted by love.

Besides, it is cruel ingratitude to be slack in serving and pleasing parents, considering how much they have done for the children. That sum of a hundred pounds that I had cost my father, during the first ten years of my life, was a great weight skilfully attached at the right place to drive the wheels of my childhood obedience at a quicker pace.

A higher lesson, shadow of this earthly one, shines down from heaven here,—a lesson for parents and children alike. If God should reckon either our iniquities or his own bounties, who could stand? But although our Father in heaven giveth liberally, and upbraideth not, we should reckon his bounties, and place them as weights on our sluggish wills, to stimulate gratitude and service. “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.”

XIII.

THE OMNIBUS.



THE Omnibus, like the steamboat, the railway, and the telegraph, has sprung up in our own day. Our fathers knew it not. It is a kind of moving parable,—a true picture of human life, especially in modern times. Its passengers are in many aspects like the population of the world. Some are old and feeble, needing help both in sitting down and rising up; while others, with the spring of youth within them, leap lightly in and out.

Some have soft white hands and costly garments; others are poorly clad and toil-worn. Some have sparkling eyes and laughing lips; others have falling tears under widows' weeds. This one sits silent in a corner; those two chat cheerfully all the way. Here a new passenger

joins the company; and there an old one drops off: as deaths diminish the mass of humanity on the one side, and births on the other side still keep the number up. An omnibus is the world in miniature. It is like one of those panoramas wherein they give you on one canvas, and in the course of a single evening, a vivid picture of a journey that embraces a hemisphere of the globe.

Now that the thing has come into general use, there is interest in the uncouth but not inappropriate name that has sprung up along with it. *Omnibus* is a Latin word, employed in a rude way to signify FOR ALL.

An interesting memory about an omnibus cleaves to me, and I shall narrate the incident here precisely as it happened, twenty years ago. My readers shall at least have a faithful photograph, with no artificial ornaments stuck in.

Some great cities are liable, during the short days of winter, to very dense fogs. Those that occur in London are celebrated throughout the civilized world. One who has been enveloped in the cloud will not soon forget the cold clammy sensation that accompanied it. Although I have occasionally been in London during a fog, my

experience of the phenomenon is chiefly connected with Glasgow. That city is situated, like London, on a river; and although of much smaller extent, it is proportionally more thickly enveloped in smoke, from the many great factories with which it is both permeated and surrounded.

When the fog encircles the city about Christmas, there is a darkness "that may be felt" in a very literal and material sense. The air that you must breathe is cold and damp, and impregnated with smoke. The blood, not properly renovated in the lungs, fails to fulfil its functions; the brain, lacking its proper stimulant, flags in its work; and what we call our "spirits" fall below zero. The flag of life flutters listlessly half-mast high. The only mental exercise that can be performed with continuity and energy is to wish heartily that the fog would clear away.

It was in such a condition and in such circumstances that I stood, one day towards the end of December, in one of the streets near the heart of the city, waiting for a public conveyance that should take me to my home in the suburbs. It was three o'clock in the afternoon: the lamps were lighted, and might be discerned if you

stood near enough; but you lost sight of one before you gained sight of its nearest neighbour.

My watch, unaffected by the gloom, may be trusted; and an omnibus is now due at this corner. I already hear it approaching, although I don't expect to see it for another minute yet. At length a large and lofty vehicle looms in dim outline through the mist, nodding heavily and jolting on its springs, as the wheels rumble over the irregularities of the causeway. By force of habit I button my greatcoat, and make all tight in preparation for leaping on. Not till it was abreast did the huge dim bulk emerge distinctly into view, and then—*it was a hearse!*

Already depressed in spirit by the state of the atmosphere, the sudden discovery of my mistake carried me further in the same direction. A cold shudder, partly physical, partly mental, crept through me as I turned away.

The vehicle passed, and although it was lost to view the next instant, I followed its movements far with the mind's eye. Strange and ominous mistake! was my first thought. But a second thought sprang up,—It is not a mistake at all. It is the omnibus. This, and this alone,

is the carriage FOR ALL. We must all take passage for the grave. "It is appointed unto men once to die." Willing or unwilling, ready or unready, every one of us must take a place in this carriage. In some such conveyance the dust must be borne to the dust.

Death in the distance troubles life in the foreground of the present. The prospect of death is a dark spot on the sun of a bright life. If there were any way of getting that spot blotted out, not only would departure from this world become safe, but also the sojourn in this world now would become cheerful. The Lord our Redeemer, who knows what is in man,—the sorrows as well as the sins,—took special note of this trouble; he saw that men are "through fear of death all their lifetime subject to bondage," and when he gave himself, the just for the unjust, he had it specially in view to deliver them from this terror (Heb. ii. 15).

He pities us when he sees the brightness of life dimmed by the fear of dying. I would like to enjoy that portion of my life-course which lies between the present moment and my latest breath; but I cannot enjoy it as long as death, like a serpent with his sting in him, lies coiled

in the grass that skirts my path, watching his opportunity to make the fatal spring. Can any one take the serpent's sting away, so that I may be delivered from this fear?

There is a victory, and a way of making it mine. A man of flesh and blood like me was able in this life to defy that enemy to his face; was able to turn that terror into a glad song. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" A happy man was he. When death is no longer dreadful, life becomes tenfold more sweet. Nor let any one suppose that this is Paul's experience, and he was a great apostle, and that common people need not expect to be on a level with him. The way by which he entered into peace is open still; and we are as welcome as he, on the same terms. It would be contrary to Scripture and dishonouring to Christ to suppose that it was in any respect easier for Saul of Tarsus to get into peace with God than it is for you and me. The gate is open, and the inscription over it is "Whosoever will." It is a great mistake to hang back, and make up your mind to stand trembling all your days at a distance from God, on the ground that great attainments are for great saints, and that it

would be presumptuous in you to expect the same.

This might be reasonable if God's favour went by the merits of the man, but it goes by the worth of Christ; and the worth of Christ is as great for you as it was for Paul or John, when you accept it. The blood of Christ cleanses you and me from all sin, as it cleansed them. There is no more condemnation to us than there was to them, when we are "in Christ Jesus." In Christ we are as safe, and should be as happy, as they were. There are no step-children in the family of God; he does not make favourites of the cleverest, whose names have filled the world, and neglect those who were never heard of half a mile from home.

One thing at a time; and the point in hand here and now is that pardon and peace with God, offered free in the Mediator, and simply accepted by a needy sinner, by removing the fear of death, *makes life bright and happy all the way*. It is unspeakably more safe and more profitable and more pleasant to close with Christ in the morning of life, than to run in terror to the refuge when the sun of life's day is going down. In the practice of the divine Physician,

the same prescription that secures a safe departure, secures also a happy life. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

A hearse is an omnibus, carrying all to the grave; but see! another chariot, bright and beautiful, is coming up before it. This also is *for all*. It is the gospel. In lines of light, "written not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God," I read an inscription borne aloft upon its front,—"*Good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.*" This chariot is now abreast of the spot where the reader stands; it is passing, leap in; it will carry you through the wilderness, and home to heaven. The other omnibus is coming up behind,—how far behind I do not know; but come when it may, it has no terror for those who are found in Christ.

Those who in the morning of life obey the Redeemer's call, secure two good things: one is *safety* when death comes at last; and the other is *happiness* while life is running now. The blessed hope gilds with gladsome sunlight all the pilgrim's path on earth, from the present footstep to the portals of the celestial city.

XIV.

AN INCIDENT OF TRAVEL.

AMONG the many pretty little towns that nestle on the Rhine, overhung by picturesque ruined castles, between Coblenz and Bingen, there is one on the left bank called St. Goar. Another lies on the opposite side, so like it that a stranger, in the moonlight, might be excused for supposing it was the reflection of the original town in the smooth waters of the river. Both are surmounted by ruined fortresses. That on the right bank, overhanging Goarhausen, is the Castle of the Cat, well known to tourists; that on the left, above St. Goar, is the Rheinfels, said to have been the largest and strongest fortification of the whole valley.

St. Goar, like its neighbours, lies in a very

narrow bed. Between the river and the high precipitous rocks it certainly would not have room to turn itself, if it needed to turn. Lengthways it may stretch itself out to any extent along the bank; but it is strait-laced about the waist, and its health is not improved by the straitness. Besides the town, the highway has from time immemorial demanded and obtained a share of the limited space.

After all and over all a modern intruder has thrust himself in, with a stronger hand than that of the feudal lords who possessed the castles in the Middle Ages,—the railway. Room must needs be made for the new claimant. The rails could not be laid on the water, could not be laid on the road, could not be laid on the rocky height. Streets and houses must stand out of the way, and squeeze themselves into still smaller space, that the locomotive may hiss and rumble past with its noisy following. Accordingly, much ingenuity has been expended in making room, and in some places the room made is very scanty. In the main the rails here are laid above the town, between it and the perpendicular rock.

I had a particular reason for halting at St.

Goar to rest a day, rather than at any of the neighbouring towns. I had halted there about four or five years before, and been treated with great kindness by a worthy couple, the owners of a *gasthof*—a plain but comfortable and plentiful native hotel in those parts—to which I had been recommended by the conductor of the Rhine steamer. On that occasion the host and hostess made us feel at home and more, and ere we left our acquaintance had grown into a friendship that kept a place in the memory. One of the pleasing features of the scene was a pretty winsome girl of twelve or thirteen, the only daughter of the house, at home from school on vacation, who willingly accompanied us in our excursions, and tried her school English on the strangers.

Induced by these memories, I halted this time for rest at St. Goar, in preference to all its rivals. Going straight from the pier to the *gasthof*, I immediately found my friend the hostess,—but oh, how changed! Formerly she was very cheerful, and active, and talkative. Indeed, this was the weak point of the good woman. The words flowed like the Rhine, and seemed to abhor the vacuum of a moment's pause; but the

looks and the whole bearing were withal so loving and so mother-like, that you could not find fault with the volubility.

Now she looked much more than five years older. All the motherly kindness and the tendency to talk continued, but the smiles had fled, and tears had taken their place. Before she answered my question whether she had room for me and my party, she had poured out to me in literally a flood of tears the tale of her bereavement. Without any figure of speech, the beginning and the ending of it was, "My daughter is dead." Two years had passed since this heavy stroke fell, but the wound was still fresh and green.

At the moment I called, the good woman was in a state of great excitement. There was something quite sublime in her air and communication. A woman, fifty years of age, of pleasing features, sparkling eyes, and animated gestures, enduring a great sorrow—that sorrow stirred at the moment by an event that was not only tragic but shocking—seemed to burst upon a stranger somewhat in the air and mien of a prophetess.

With the recital of a former sorrow the an-

nouncement of a present horror was interwoven with a haste and energy which, though at the moment incomprehensible, soon received an explanation. A lady, the wife of a pastor, superintendent and school inspector of the district, "was killed yesterday *up there!*" and she pointed with her finger to the ceiling of the room. The terrible accident had not taken place in the upper floor of the hotel, but in the railway station; yet her words and gestures were quite appropriate. Everything is very near every other thing in St. Goar, and the railway station presses close on the roofs and chimneys there.

The previous day, at twelve o'clock, the lady had been killed in an attempt to cross the rails. The body had been mangled in an extraordinary manner. "The head went that way, and the arms that way; a foot lay there, and a hand lay here,"—and my informant threw her arms out energetically, by way of enacting the scene. The daughter of the unfortunate lady had gone into the office to obtain tickets. On coming out she saw the fragments on the rail, and passionately exclaimed, "I hope it is not my mother!" A gentleman present finding a severed hand at his feet, took the ring from its finger and pre-

sented it to her; on seeing it, she dropped on the ground in a faint.

But I must explain now the reason why my hostess crushed all this terrible information into the first moments of our interview. The bells of the church were tolling as she spoke. The funeral of the deceased lady was proceeding at that moment in the churchyard, about a hundred yards distant, and my friend had conceived an eager desire that I should then and there join in the solemn ceremonies. There was not a moment to be lost.

Here, however, another thread of the web comes in. While she was in the act of showing me the nearest way to the churchyard, lowering her tone, and throwing open again the fountain of her tears, she whispered: "Look near the grave for a small white cross; it marks the resting-place of my daughter." Here was a discovery for me. Mingling with the immediate and ostensible motive of giving me an opportunity of being present at the religious services of the funeral, was another and a deeper,—the mother's instinctive wish that this stranger, who knew how lovely the child was in her life, might look upon the resting-place of the beloved dust.

I went to the churchyard, and found a great company assembled round an open grave. A young man, attired in the simple gown of the Protestant minister, stood at the head addressing the assembly. He spoke with simplicity and tenderness and dignity on themes the most appropriate for the place and circumstances. After that a band of school children sang a hymn, and then the minister prayed.

Here another incident occurred, which, if I may judge by my own feelings, must have greatly increased the painful interest of all. Just as the last sentence of the prayer began, a passing engine—for the rails here touched the low wall of the little graveyard—emitted one of those screams which all travellers know to their cost, and which seem to rend asunder the nerves of one's body where they are plaited together, as you might tear asunder the strands of a twisted cord. The last sentence was drowned in the horrid screech.

As I looked on the tall spare form of the bereaved husband, standing statue-like by the grave, I thought, If that scream grates harshly on my heart, what must it be to him,—memorial, as it must have been, of the very instrument

whose stroke had taken away the desire of his eyes? Yet, on second thought, I perceived that the whistle of the engine, unwelcome though it be at the moment to the senses, calls up rather pleasing moral associations; for its design and effect are to warn of danger, and so to save. Like some "terrors of the Lord" that stand written in the Scriptures, this sound, though grievous at the moment, may be effectual to make the trespasser "turn and live."

The young minister who had officiated stepped gently up to the bereaved husband, and led him from the spot. The crowd melted away.

I found the monument, a small pure white marble cross, with the name—"Wilhelmine Michel, aged seventeen"—on the top, and a verse from a hymn graven at the root:—

"Es ist bestimmt in Gottes Rath,
Dass man von liebsten was man hat,
Muss scheiden." *

I had stooped down to copy the lines in my pocket-book; and when I rose, I was surprised to find an elderly gentleman in full black dress

* "It stands fixed in God's decree,
That man from the dearest that he hath
Must part."

standing gazing on the white cross, with tears in his eyes. Thinking it necessary to explain and apologize for what I was doing, I addressed him, and said that the daughter of a friend of mine was buried there. "She was my daughter," he replied, with suppressed sobs. I should explain that the word "friend" in German has one form in the masculine and another in the feminine, so that my intimation was equivalent to saying my friend was her mother. It was thus that I was on this occasion introduced to my former host, for he had gone out to attend the funeral before I arrived.

When I left the hospitable home of the bereaved mother, two days afterwards, the scene was renewed and repeated. She grasped my hand and wept, and sighed, "My daughter." I wept with her, and whispered that when Christ the Lord, who reigns over all, takes away such a treasure, he expects to be taken himself closer into the empty and wounded heart. She made emphatic signs of assent, but the channel of speech was choked for the moment. And so I took leave of the *Gasthof zum Kalter Keller* in St. Goar.

XV.

WRECKS.



IN the summer of 1870 I had occasion to spend a few weeks in Canada. Instead of taking the rail between Toronto and Montreal, I took the steamer all the way, arranging the voyage so that I should be on the lake during the night and on the river all day. On smooth water, and beneath a bright sky, I renewed my old acquaintance with the Lake of the Thousand Islands, and the varied scenery of the St. Lawrence. I could not convey to my readers an adequate conception of the enjoyment imparted to me by the loveliness of nature on that voyage if I would, and would not even if I could. I have another end in view at this moment. I desire to concentrate the attention of my readers, and my own, on one

object, and that not a feature of the landscape as it lay in nature, but a sad memorial of human error and suffering,—a melancholy footprint left by human travellers on the sands of Time.

To save the time which would have been consumed on the slow and safe route through the canal, the steamer shoots the long and dangerous rapids above the city of Montreal. The vast volume of the river runs for several miles downhill over an extremely rugged and rocky bed. The channel, too, is tortuous; the rocks to be avoided now projecting from the right side, and anon from the left. The water is broken, and leaps in angry whitened masses over the stones.

Four men are at the wheel. They seem to be one man with many heads and hands, obeying one will, and acting in perfect harmony. You might take them for a Siamese quartette. How keenly their eyes strain forward! how mighty the purchase of these eight bent brawny arms upon the wheel! Their own lives, and the lives of all on board, hang on these eyes and these arms for a few moments. If they let go, or turn the wheel the wrong way for an instant, the ship and her contents will be crushed like an egg-shell.

The whole scene is grand and beautiful. The

men are so accustomed to their work, that the "shooting" is generally accomplished day by day in safety. There is so much sense of safety that we can enjoy the bold leap; but, at the same time, there is as much danger as suffices to infuse some measure of the sublime into our sensations. There is no lightness of manner to be seen anywhere on board during those moments. The laughter, loud enough sometimes in other places, is all hushed while we are shooting the rapids. Danger is near enough to make still the surface of the shallowest minds.

On this occasion, about midway down the leap we shot past a wreck that had been driven by the stream high upon a rock on the very edge of the navigable channel. There stood the iron ribs of a lost steamer, bare and separate, leaning against the sky, like the skeleton of a camel seen by a caravan in the Desert. The wreck seemed to have lain long in that position, for the iron plates were nearly all worn off, and only the frame of stronger beams remained. The iron would have been valuable, but none could approach the spot to recover the treasure.

Sometimes they build a beacon in the sea to give warning of a sandbank or a sunken rock.

Where ships have struck and sunk, it is the part of a wise government to erect a monument on the spot, that other ships in after-times may give the dangerous place a wide berth, and so secure their own safety. But here is a beacon not planned by human foresight, or reared by human hands. The error of one man warns other men against error. The wreck is itself the beacon. More impressive and more memorable is the lesson read in these twisted and shattered iron bars, than if it had been graven in alphabetic characters on a granite pillar. The ribs of the ruined ship lying on the rock, and pointing up to the sky, give more emphatic warning to future navigators than the most elaborate structure that could have been reared on the spot. Careful and anxious at every portion of the rough and dangerous rapid, the steersmen held in their breath, and knit their brows, and clinched the wheel with more energy, as the ship with her living cargo shot past the broken fragments of a neighbour that was lost there. As for us, the unskilled passengers, we breathed more freely when the ominous skeleton was out of sight.

The wreck of the lost, seen on the margin of

the stream, constitutes the most effective beacon to warn subsequent voyagers off the rock. As we move down the great current of life, with quicksands and hidden rocks right and left at every stage, we get many warnings to walk warily; but there is one class of monuments that give the lesson more loudly and more memorably than all the rest. Not the moral homily about the loss of the man, but *the man lost*, is the best persuasive to avoid the shoals and keep the safe channel.

Young people often see a man or woman, not now young, thrown up, in a wrecked and ragged condition, on the edges of the path. These poor remnants of humanity do not advance at all; they do not in any sense get forward. They have for a long time been at a standstill; they are like skeletons. It is a bare and open sort of thing; every wind blows through it. There are the bones of what was once a human life; but no flesh covers them now. They have neither a good name nor a whole garment. They have nothing to lose, and they seem not to expect any gain. They are surprised if any one pities them; for they have ceased to count themselves members of the common family.

These are monuments. No human hand has broken down good lives in order to build beacons of the wreck. The life, bounding onward in the strength and confidence of youth, has struck, and so become a warning beacon to those that follow.

Look on that poor, shivering, ill-clad creature that pleads on the wayside for a penny, that with it he may purchase another draught of the poison that has brought him already so low! Perhaps he does not *give* you a warning, but he *is* one. As you value life,—beginning here and running into immortality,—as you fear God, love your neighbours, and regard your own soul, keep far from the cup and the company and the resorts of drinkers. Run all the course in the deep channel. Never dare even once to graze the edge of these rocks and quicksands on the margin of your life-course, where the public-house opens its door and trims its brilliant lights; where the song of the reveller resounds; where the fiery cup, like a serpent, first fascinates and then devours.

XVI.

ATTACK AND DEFENCE.

IT is my purpose in this lesson to throw one stone more upon the cairn, already very broad and very high, which serves as monument of the intelligence, faithfulness, and affection of the dog, as the servant and friend of man. Facts of deep and varied interest have accumulated on this subject, till they have reached almost the dimensions of a library; and still they come. I shall transcribe one from the memory of my childhood.

We had a dog named Johnstone—on what account so named I never knew, as he and I were exactly contemporaneous, and grew up together in the same family. He had, however, one great advantage over me, in that he much sooner reached the years of discretion. His

observation and tact in difficult circumstances were the talk of the neighbourhood, at a time when I could do little more than walk alone; on the other hand, when my faculties began to open, poor Johnstone was already experiencing the infirmities of age.

Johnstone was a very small dog. His colour was a light brown, approaching in some parts to white. His hair was very abundant, but smooth and silky. His tail was by much the most striking feature: he wore it always in a stiff semicircle, with its point touching the middle of his back. He was never known to unbend this bow during the waking hours of his life, except in one or two instances, in which, notwithstanding his uniformly peaceful disposition, he became involved in a canine skirmish. In these cases Johnstone always manifested "the better part of valour," and sought safety in flight; and in the act of flight the proud curve slackened, and the tail was permitted to resume its natural position—hanging behind.

The curved tail was very beautiful. The hair was very long, and always scrupulously clean. Every individual hair, too, radiated straight out on its own account, and did not lean upon its

neighbour. It resembled a rainbow, not in the shape alone, for it exhibited several belts of different shades, melting away imperceptibly into each other. On the inner side of the curve, which nature made for the upper side, but which pride converted into the under, the colour was dark brown, approaching in the very centre almost to black; then on the sides it became lightish brown; while on the convex surface, crowning all, the points of the long hairs were silky and white.

Johnstone had none of the fierce looks which belong to terriers; and none of the long rough hair which hides their eyes. His face was gentle and intelligent: and no trace of combativeness appeared either in his skull or his countenance. He did not much affect the company of other dogs: his delight was not "to bark and bite," but to keep company with human beings, and make himself generally useful in the family. His was not the courage or strength to seize a burglar and give him over to the authorities; but he slept with one eye open, and the softest step that approached by night could not elude his vigilance. In short, Johnstone thoroughly knew his own place and did his own duty. He

did not undertake to drive off the thieves, but he might be trusted to awaken his master.

The zeal and ingenuity of this little dog in contriving methods of making himself useful, often afforded amusement both to the inmates of the house and to strangers. I shall here record the one which circumstances have rendered to me the most memorable example.

My readers must remember that the house stood alone, with no roof near except the barn, the stable, and other lesser offices for rural work. The kitchen was a place of all-work; and in summer the door stood open all day, affording free and easy ingress to all comers.

One of the operations which must be performed two or three times every week, was the baking of oat-cakes. When the dough had been rolled into thin circular sheets of about twelve inches in diameter, they were first spread on the *girdle*, a large circular iron plate suspended over the fire. As soon as the cakes had attained in this way such a degree of consistency as enabled the operator to handle without breaking them, they were transferred to the *toaster*, a tessellated iron instrument, which stood in an upright attitude in front of the fire. Here the baking

was completed. The cakes stood for a considerable time side by side in this position, with their front exposed to the embers and their back leaning on the open iron bars.

A particular hen, a strong-minded female in her line, more courageous, or more impudent, than all the rest of her kind, learned, by the smell, probably, in the barn-yard, when the baking of cakes had reached this stage, and betook herself to the spot, intent on obtaining a savoury morsel in a dishonest way. This happened not once or twice, but many times. The boldness and the thievish propensities of this hen became a nuisance. She stood on her tiptoes on the hearthstone, and picked holes in the cakes. Often detected and driven away, she as often watched her opportunity and returned.

Here Johnstone saw his opportunity. Observing, from frequent pursuit and scolding, that the hen in eating the cakes was doing what displeased the authorities, he was quick to infer that if he could keep her off he would confer a favour on the family. Whether he had sense enough to know that the act would be right, I could not venture to determine; but most certainly he expected it would be popular.

Accordingly, when the next baking began, Johnstone presented himself as a volunteer, and mounted guard on the cakes. In due time the hen was seen stalking cautiously forward, lifting her foot at each step very high, and setting it softly on the ground again; bending her head, now to the right, now to left, and listening. The little dog stood, indeed, between her and her prey, but she made no account of him.

Sooth to say, Johnstone had not hitherto been a terror to evil-doers in the barn-yard. The poultry did not cherish a high respect for his courage; they knew their own strength, and could put him to flight at any moment. The hen on this occasion, bent not on fighting but on feeding, meant simply to ignore the dog; and seeing him standing at one end of the toaster, marched towards the other. But, quick as thought, he was between her and the cake she coveted.

Annoyed, but silent, she ran to the other end, only to find Johnstone there before her. The dog had chosen a good strategic position; for while his adversary was obliged to traverse the outer and larger semicircle, he moved on an inner and shorter curve. The consequence was,

that whatever point she meant to attack, he was always between her and her prey. As yet, not a blow had been struck on either side. The two generals manœuvred only. There was not even a bark on the one side, or a cackle on the other. All was done in silence; but as yet the advantage all lay with the defence. The attack had completely failed.

At this point the patience of the assailant began to give way. In matters of war, the defence had an advantage both in sex and in race. Even a vigorous member of the feathered tribe can hardly be a match for a quadruped, much more fully developed. From whatever cause, the hen began to waste her strength in a hasty cackle, while Johnstone maintained a dignified if not contemptuous silence. Calm in temper, sharp of eye, and lithe of limb, he was always found between her and the cake.

At this stage of the campaign the assailant suddenly and decisively changed her tactics; but the skill and promptitude of the defence was equal to every emergency. Abandoning her zigzag efforts to turn the enemy's flank, the hen at length determined upon a direct assault. Halting and retreating a step, she made a run

and a leap on the dog, according to the manner in which fowls do fight. Making a leap from the ground, she struck simultaneously with both feet and both wings, and her bill; but this mighty broadside did no execution, for Johnstone had in an instant taken measures for rendering it abortive. His method was so simple that it approached the sublime. He quietly turned his face to the fire, and received the shock on his bushy and well-padded posteriors. As the Roman battering-rams struck harmlessly on the feather-beds which Josephus hung up on the walls of Jotapata, the vigorous assault of the hen did no damage to the extemporized elastic rampart.

So cool was the little dog under the fierce onset, that he was observed to bend his neck at the critical moment, and with his eyes at a safe distance, to observe the success of his stratagem. On such occasions, if a smile did not actually curl on his lip, it glanced in his eyes. Thoroughly despising his adversary, he was as much amused as we were at her blustering efforts. After several such broadsides had been discharged, the assailant, out of breath and in a great passion, was obliged to beat a retreat without ever once having tasted or touched the coveted morsel.

Johnstone never pursued. He agreed in opinion with those strategists who hold that you should make a bridge for a flying enemy. Nor did he plume himself on his victory. His was no mercenary spirit, that would expect a bit of the cake he had successfully defended. He looked for no such reward. Immediately after the victory he would walk about with an air of indifference, as if nothing extraordinary had happened. He seemed to think he had done no more than his duty, and did not expect praise. To be noticed and spoken to in a kind tone, was reward enough for this faithful servant at all times.


The same process was often repeated, with smaller variations in detail than occur ordinarily in human warfare. To describe one action is enough. The same vehement assault, and the same cool, quiet, easy, and complete defence, were again and again repeated. These duels of mingled strategy and fighting attracted a good deal of attention among human observers in those days. On more than one occasion I have seen the battle brought on, as it were, to order, for the amusement of friends who happened to call.

When the tactics of the combatants were described, our neighbours could scarcely believe the story. In order to prove its truth, a cake was hastily prepared and placed before the fire; the door was left open and the fowls driven near it; Johnstone was brought to the spot. The trap thus laid, the process went on as I have described it, precisely as if an exhibition had been advertised at that place and hour, with company admitted by ticket to behold the spectacle. It was this artificial reproduction of the battle, for the conviction or amusement of friends, that engraved the whole scene deeply in my memory, so that I can describe it to-day without omitting or distorting a single feature.

A useful moral may, without any violence, be drawn from this simple narrative,—a moral that might direct our readers in other and more momentous conflicts:—Take the right side; keep your temper; and persevere.

XVII.

OFFENDING LITTLE ONES.

N this lesson I propose to tell of a dark spot that fell and lay on the sun of my life in its early morning, that thereby I may warn my young friends to beware of heedlessly hurting little ones.

I was playing by the roadside, near our home, when a man in a military uniform—red coat, dangling sword, and plumed helmet—came up. After learning from some one near to what family I belonged, the great bearded and helmed soldier stooped down, took me up in his arms, and kissed me. I never learned exactly what was the cause of his special interest in this child—whether he was simply a friend of my father, or whether some more tender affection moved him in connection with the memory of my

mother. At any rate, it is certain that his regard for the child was all owing to his friendship for the parents. After fondling me sufficiently in his big arms, he set me gently on the ground again, slipping a shilling into my hand, and then he stalked away. I saw him no more.

The elder children then came up, and discovered the shilling in my hand. It was then that the terrible words, "*You are 'listed,*" fell on my ear. This was the black spot on the disc of my morning sun. Nor were these words left to make their own impression. They grouped around me, the elder children of our own house, reinforced by others from the neighbourhood, and expounded with cruel minuteness what the action meant. "He is a soldier of the king's army," they said. "He has enlisted you: you have taken the shilling: you are too young yet to join the regiment; but whenever you grow big, a band of soldiers will come and take you away to be a soldier."

They conspired in a falsehood in order to afford a moment's amusement to themselves. The agony in a little child's countenance amused them. Nor were they one whit worse than the

average boyhood of that day or this. There is an instinct of cruelty in big-boy nature that always tends to gratify itself at the expense of small boys. It is necessary to watch and check it, and train youth out of it. Education is neglected, if this root of bitterness is not detected and drawn out.

This bit of sport passed away from the memory of my tormentors after they had enjoyed it for half an hour, and probably none of them ever remembered it again; but it sank into my heart of hearts, and remained there, "a spot that would not out" by any washing, until it was removed by my own observation and judgment after I had reached the years of discretion. As long as I counted myself doomed, I kept silence from fear. I brooded over it from day to day. I conceived that to be a soldier meant to stand before the French and be shot. My imagination pictured the approach of armed men to seize me and drag me from home. I formed wild plans of flight. I lay down at night thinking of the fated day, and awoke in the morning with the stone lying heavy and cold on my heart.

When at last, by the natural growth of my

own mind, I had thrown the incubus off, I was ashamed to reveal what I considered my own childishness, and so I continued to keep silence, so that none knew the sorrow that had dimmed the light of a child's life. I reveal it now, that I may set a beacon up on a treacherous sand-bank for the benefit of future navigators.

One of the many lines that constitute the character of Jesus, and reveal his divinity, is his tender, thoughtful regard for little children. He was much displeased when his own disciples, with officious zeal, sought to keep them back from his bosom. When he delivered his discourse on offences,—to warn all his followers against the sin and danger of casting a stumbling-block in the way of one another,—he had a little child set in the midst of the circle as the very text of his sermon. (Matt. xviii. 1-14.) Whatever may be the exact meaning of the expression, "In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven," it certainly bears that little children are under God's special protection, and that wantonly to vex and offend them is peculiarly displeasing to him.

Whatever degree of moral blame may attach

to untrue statements made for purposes of amusement, among equals, it is certainly sin in God's sight to tell a falsehood to a little child, although the word is spoken in sport, when the child has not the knowledge and experience to detect the (it may be obvious) untruth. You thereby take advantage of the weakness of a child in order to wound it. You strike recklessly and cruelly, with a sharp tongue, one who is the ward of our Father in heaven. He will require it at your hands.

As the most of this mischief is done not from malice but from want of thought, I am very anxious to enlist the interest of all my youthful readers in the matter. Watch and pray that ye enter not into this temptation. Tendencies to this error are constantly springing up within, and opportunities are constantly offering themselves without. It would be a very profitable and pleasant exercise for children who have younger children within their reach, to set a watch upon their lips on this side, and resolutely abstain from all shades of untruth in presence of the little ones. It is bad to stick pins into a living worm, in order to laugh at the creature's contortions; it is tenfold worse to pierce a little

child's heart with sharp untruthful words, in order to make sport of its terrors. Rather take the little ones in your arms, and so, in that respect, be like the Lord.

XVIII.

THE MAN AT THE WHEEL.

WHEN I was a minister in Glasgow, I had often occasion to visit the families of seamen. For the most part the head of the house was absent in foreign parts, and I learned of his welfare or of his misfortunes from his wife and children. Sometimes, however, the ship was in harbour, and I heard the history of the last voyage from his own lips.

In one case the ship came into harbour, and loaded and left again, leaving the seaman behind. He had made his last voyage on this troubled sea, and his next would bear him to a better world. He was a man between fifty and sixty years of age. He was fading away in a slow consumption, and there was leisure to get the story of his life bit by bit on successive visits.

I shall not tell—indeed, I do not remember—the details of his humble history; but the turning-point remains clear, and I can give it correctly: it stands out from the level plain of the man's life, the one bright point of light on a large dim surface, which painters know well how to render like a glancing eye that gives life in a shaded corner of the canvas. It was for him the turning-point for both worlds, for it was the direct means of snatching his own life and that of his comrades from impending shipwreck, and the indirect occasion of leading him into the life that has no ending.

He was sailing first mate in a large ship in West Indian waters, under an unsteady captain. They were in the centre of a rock-bound bay, with a gale blowing right towards land. The ship had sea-room enough: there was no particular danger either in land or water. With good management, all was easy; but good management was needed. The ship was in the cavity of a semicircular basin, like the interior side of a half-moon, with a rocky pointed horn at either extremity. If she is well steered, she will clear the promontory in front and gain the wide sea; but if she is not well steered, she will be driven among the rocks and become a wreck.

The captain held the helm; but his eye was dim and his arm unsteady. He was staggering under drink. The mate modestly offered to relieve him at the wheel. But no; the captain knew all about it: he was the man to bring the ship clear out,—nobody could do it but himself. Your drunkard, when he is unfit for anything, considers himself fit for all things. The mate looked on a few minutes more. The ship, held harder up to the wind than she could bear, instead of making way was drifting to the shore.

It was a moment of great agony; for the law gives a master despotic power at sea, and any act of disobedience is visited with great severity. It is only in the last extremity that resistance to a master is safe. In the mate's judgment, the last extremity had now come. He tossed aside the feeble incapable, and grasped the wheel, with arms, alas! stronger far than they were at the time the tale was told to me. On the instant, the ship, like a living creature pleased to feel that a competent rider now held the reins, turned her head in a line that cleared the cape and no more, shook her shoulders as she settled into the furrow, tore her way through the

breakers, cleared the point, and emerged with a bound into the deep safe blue.

It was now the turn of the strong and sober man to tremble. The recoil from the responsibility he had incurred made all the nerves of his body quiver. In that moment he had grown many years older. His hair became prematurely gray. The blow that he delivered saved his own and his comrades' lives; but its rebound laid himself on a sick-bed.

Life on the other side of that event became a new thing to him. There was no frivolity in it. All seemed deep and solemn. This life seemed now a part of eternity. He sought and found the peace of God, which kept his heart and mind in all subsequent troubles. By the time that I became acquainted with the mate, the anchor of his soul was sure and steadfast within the veil. Some tossings he still endured; but he reckoned them but the swell that seafarers expect outside the harbour gates.

"Now, children, this shows,"—you know already what it shows, but you will not count it out of place or think it long if I write out the lesson for you.

Each human life is a solitary sail on the sea

of Time. Each ship bears a precious freight, and must needs pass many dangers. All depends on the helm,—or rather on the steersman who holds it. In the first instance, a false and incapable steersman, a deceitful heart, stands at the wheel, and leads the ship astray. If there be not a change of master, you cannot be saved. This false and incapable pilot is steering you to doom; yet he will not voluntarily surrender. He must be superseded by violence: a revolution is needed. The better part—the new man—must rise against the usurper, must crucify the flesh.

There is a grand crisis in the life of every voyager who ultimately reaches the haven. In every case, at some point in the voyage the old man has been put off, and the new put on. The carnal mind is dethroned, and the soul, almost lost, but altogether saved, now looks unto Jesus, and exclaims with all the force of a new and ransomed life,—We will have this Man to reign over us. The vessel, saved by his grace and power from shipwreck, is for the remainder of the voyage abandoned to his guidance, and at the end of the voyage gets an abundant entrance into those new heavens and earth wherein “there is no more sea.”

XIX.

BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE



OUR house stood on the bank of a river, and almost all the memories of my childhood are warped round that soft, silent, serpentine stream. A turn of the river close by, where the bank on one side was high and steep, was known and dreaded as the *Boat-hole*. It was very deep: the water was sluggish there—no current was discernible. But a little below, where the bed became shallow, the stream rippled out suddenly, as if the water, weary of its imprisonment in the dungeon, were glad to resume its course.

Our play was chiefly in the shallow spots, where, especially in the summer, we led a sort of amphibious life, partly on land and partly in the water. But for one species of amusement

the Boat-hole afforded the best scope—that was the sailing of toy ships. Although we stood in awe of the steep slippery bank and the black sullen pool, the desire of seeing the ship sailing overcame the fear; and so we sometimes ventured. It was useless to launch our craft on a current, for it would immediately be carried away; but at the semicircular pool, on the convex side, the water was, for our purposes, equal to a lake. There was no perceptible movement.

Having completed a beautiful fairy-like craft, with tall masts and snow-white sails, I crept alone one day to the edge of the pool where it was deepest, and consequently stillest, that I might put her sailing qualities to the test. She exceeded even the expectations of her constructor,—she glided along the smooth water like a thing of life. As if to make my joy complete, a slight breeze sprang up and filled the sails: they bulged out like pillows, and away went the ship! Alas! it was soon beyond the reach of my long rod, and I was left disconsolate. Further and further my treasure glided out. And now she was near the middle of the channel: a little further, and she will be caught

in the stream that flows on the other side, and carried altogether away.

I suppose my heart sank as much over the loss of my little ship as a big shipmaster's over the loss of his. I am helpless and friendless; I sit down on the bank and weep. At this moment a tall, strong youth heaves in sight—as opportunely as the daughter of Pharaoh when Moses in his basket was almost caught in the Nile stream. He knew me: he saw my distress—he pitied me—he ran to the rescue. I was glad to see his big strong limbs rushing down the bank, evidently with the intention of helping; and I had perfect faith in his power. We who were little fellows attributed a sort of omnipotence to Davy Christy. With his strong arms, and clear eye, and hopeful benevolent heart, we had seen him often come to help a little one in extremity, and had never seen him fail. On that occasion, accordingly, my fears disappeared and my tears were dried as soon as I saw my deliverer approaching.

As he descended the bank, he gathered two or three boulders—smooth stones sticking in the clay, larger than a man's hand. When he reached the lip of the water, he began to throw the big

stones with all his might right in the direction of my dear little ship. Now my terrors returned in tenfold force. This strong one, from whom I expected deliverance, seems bent only on destroying my treasure. I cried out bitterly, and reproached him for his cruelty. He smiled gently, laid his hand on my head, and said: "Cheer up, my little man; I shall bring your ship to shore." And then, without taking time to explain to me his method, he resumed the operation of throwing the boulders at the ship. Silenced, but not convinced, I looked sadly on.

Davy was very strong, and hitherto he had always been kind to little ones. I could not resist; I could only wait. After a little, through the blinding tears in my own eyes, and the spray raised by the splash of the stones in the river, I began to perceive that every stone went clear over the ship, and fell beyond it; and I could perceive that, though the water was stirred into a great commotion all round, the ship was now nearer the shore.

Davy gathered more boulders, and continued to throw them with all his force into the river, right in the direction of the ship. She came nearer—nearer—until she touched the ground

at my feet. I snatched the treasure, the sails dripping indeed from the storm, but all safe and sound. The ship was all my own again. I looked up in the face of my benefactor, without a word; but I suppose he saw gratitude in the urchin's eyes. He looked content, and bounded away whistling a merry tune. He had made a troubled heart happy, and so he had his reward.

Davy's heart was tender, and his hand was strong. His art in this case lay in throwing the stones into the water beyond the ship. He counted on the circular wave that would move outward on all sides from the centre where the stone penetrated the water. That wave, striking the ship on the side farther from the shore, gradually drove it home. Thus, though great stones were thrown with force, to all appearance, at the ship to drive it away, the design of throwing them was to bring it home; and such was the skill with which the operation was performed, that it resulted in complete success.

Twice in a short time my estimate of this youth was suddenly changed. At first I hailed him as my benefactor, because I knew generally his strength and generosity. Quickly I became alarmed, and thought, from what I saw but did

not understand of his work, that he was about to destroy my treasure ; and at last, from the result, I was able to dismiss my fears—to trust and love my deliverer.

Up to this point my story is a glass, like the glass of a window. We see through it ; and on the other side we observe the facts as they emerge in succession. Go round, now, and lay a sheet of soft, silvery, metallic substance over its surface behind. Stand now where we stood before, and look as we looked before. We see objects ; but not now the objects beyond the glass seen through it, but ourselves on this side of the glass reflected from it. What do we see now and here ?

We would fain enjoy life ; but our joy, afloat on a treacherous deep, secretly glides away—it is beyond our reach. We can only stand on the brink of a great deep, and weep for want of all that made life a joy. Hark ! a voice—

“ God is near thee ;
Therefore cheer thee,
Sad soul ! ”

Call on God in your trouble : he is near—he is loving—he is mighty. We begin to entertain

a hope. We call on the Almighty Helper. We look in that direction, and expect that help is at hand. But, lo! in the Word, threatenings; in Providence, painful strokes. It is worse than before: "All these things are against me." Not so fast, Jacob; they will turn out to be all in your favour. Wait, watch, hope, pray. His ways are in the deep; you cannot all at once comprehend them:

"The cloud you so much dread
Is big with mercy, and will burst
In blessings on your head."

Especially, the sharp reproofs with which the Bible bristles are like the stones which Davy Christy threw at my ship—they are not thrown in your face to drive you away, but over your head, behind you. Their force is meant and fitted, by the wisdom and love of Him who sends them, to arrest your wandering, to press you to his bosom—to comfort and to save.

THE CATERPILLAR AND THE CART.



HAD once occasion to wait an hour at a junction in the north of Ireland for a train to Londonderry. It was a bright and beautiful afternoon in July. There was nobody about the station; all was still. I had no company, and did not much care. I walked along a country road and sat down under the shade of a solitary tree.

I looked alternately at the distant hills and at the wild flowers that sprang beneath my feet. I felt it pleasant to be left alone for a little. Life is busy and bustling; a few moments of complete repose are grateful to mind as well as to body. So I abandoned myself for a little to a dreamy indolence. No duty was pressing, and with a good conscience I could enjoy a little rest.

As my eyes rested half-vacantly on the ground, I was recalled to consciousness and observation by the hasty movement of a little creature at my feet. It was a species of caterpillar; not the common plain green sort that destroy the gooseberry-bushes in spring, but a larger and much more magnificent fellow.

Indeed, I have seldom seen such a specimen of gaudiness and vanity. He was covered all over with an elegant fur. His coat was many-coloured, like Joseph's; and possibly may have caused the wearer as much trouble, by exciting the envy of less favoured brethren. Nor were the colours mixed in the ordinary way of ornament that obtains among human kind; they were arranged in lines from head to tail. The creature was like a rainbow or a ribbon; or, better still, like a ribbon border of flowers. Black, yellow, purple, and other tints alternated and shaded into each other in harmonious contrast.

There was an air of manifest vanity in the creature's movements. In taking a step it drew its head and tail together, and arched up its back most proudly; then throwing its head forward, it gained almost its own entire length at a

bound. I reflected with myself, that it is good for the moral character of worms and men not to possess very extreme beauty of person, or to wear ornaments very striking or very loud.

This, however, was none of my business; and I may not be a good judge of what is comely in caterpillar society. I now began to interest myself in the journey of my gay and sprightly friend: whither is he bound, and what may his errand be? Some party, perhaps, is in the wind; and a gay one it will be. This gentleman bids fair to be the admired of all admirers, when he reaches the festive scene; for I had never seen among caterpillars such an elegant gait or such a brilliant dress.

The ground was dry and loose, and the movements of the gentleman were somewhat impeded. Sometimes, indeed, when he had climbed a larger crumb, it toppled over with his weight, and threw him on his back in the dust. He was always able to rise quickly, and proceed again on his journey.

I thought I saw, however, on these occasions, some symptoms of a defective education. His temper did not appear to be at all good. He fretted terribly at his falls, and seemed to throw

all the blame on the poor innocent crumb of dried earth which had become the stumbling-block. His vanity, too, broke out in a ridiculous fashion. He shook the dust out of his fine fur coat, evidently afraid lest it should not be fit to appear in when the company should arrive.

But now the traveller has crossed the portion of the road that is loose and hot in the sun, and has descended, not without an unintentional somersault, which again ruffled his temper, into the rut of the cart-wheel. Here he marches in greater comfort. The perpendicular edges of the rut shield him from the rays of the sun. The bottom of the track is smooth, and has a measure of dampness, which affords him a much firmer footing. Along this delightful path he bounds magnificently, well pleased with his circumstances and his progress. He thinks he has at last obtained what he deserves, and wonders what people were about that they did not sooner provide a proper path when they knew that he was coming.

At this stage I lifted up my eyes vacantly to change the scene, by gazing for a little in another direction; when, lo! at some distance,

a cart appears coming along the road. It must pass this way. And, horror of horrors! the gay gentleman down there will be squeezed to a jelly under the wheel. The thought was too painful; I could not bear it. I had kept company so long with the caterpillar, that I had become interested in his character and progress. I must deliver him, now or never; for fate, in the shape of the country cart, is advancing apace.

I seized a twig, and gently touched him; but you should have seen the scene! He flew into a violent passion. He tumbled heels over head with rage. He would have put me and my twig out of existence, if he had been able. My first thought, on observing that display of ill-temper, was to let him alone and leave him to his fate: as much as to say, "Well, sir, if you will not take help from me, I leave you to your own resources; see what you will make of it. Your gaudy fur coat against the iron rim of the cart-wheel! let the weaker go to the wall; it is no business of mine."

On second thoughts, however, I determined not to treat him as he deserved. What would become of me, if that had been the rule in the

government of the world? On these conditions, where would I have been? Crushed under a greater wheel (see Ezek. i.). So I renewed my effort, prepared to pass over any insult, and save the poor, blind, vain creature with or against his will. I placed my twig across his path in front of him, and held it still. When I saw him on it, I lifted him up, and held him high in the air.

Then began a series of demonstrations so passionate and disrespectful, that they are not fit to be recorded. He wriggled and twisted, and even spat in his own way, through excess of blind anger. But he was helpless. He did not dare to leap from the twig; and so I carried him to the edge of the road, and laid him gently down on the short grass. The cart passed; and when I looked toward the spot where I had deposited the caterpillar, he had disappeared. He was hidden among the grass.

His life was saved; but I am quite sure he did not know that he was saved, or who was his saviour. I am certain that he reviled his unknown benefactor, when he met with his boon companions that night. As my train was not yet due, and I had no longer a striped caterpillar to watch, I fell back into a state of mental

indolence; a state in which the mind desires neither to work nor be still, but to play with some light theme, that it may be occupied but not strained.

So, in imagination, I returned to the gentleman in stripes. I followed him till he reached the end of his journey. There, to be sure, a number of his friends had assembled to receive him. The original plan, as I surmised, had been to keep a gay festival; but the purpose was frustrated by the accident in the cart-track already narrated. My ornate friend, as it turned out, was the most important personage,—was, indeed, the guest of the evening. By the delay in his arrival the feast was postponed, and by the plight in which he arrived it was altogether frustrated. His coat was much ruffled. Some of the stripes ran into each other, and he was ashamed to appear in company. After a period devoted to rest and the toilet, it was agreed that, instead of festivities for that evening, the whole company should listen to the narrative of extraordinary misfortunes which had befallen the honourable gentleman on his way.

He began; but I have already narrated the facts in my own way, and I need not repeat

them in caterpillar language. The main facts were given honestly enough, but their bearing was twisted according to his own view. He said that when he had found a beautiful and safe path, and was making his way with ease and speed, a giant of great strength but of abominable cruelty first overturned him with a tree, and then carried him away on its branches and threw him down in a field, deranging the beautifully-blended colours of his coat (here he glanced pensively along the ruffled rows of many-coloured fur), and casting him so far out of his way that he had arrived too late, and kept the company waiting, for which he was very sorry.

Much more to the same effect was said, but this is the substance of the address. The admiring company, green, white, and black,—smooth and hairy,—listened with breathless attention to the tale; and expressed at its close the most heartfelt sympathy with the sufferer, and the hottest indignation against the unknown giant who had been the author of all his misfortunes.

It was now time to step towards the station. In due time I obtained my ticket, and took my

seat. The train started, and I was under way on the iron track, as my gorgeous friend yonder had a little while ago been under way in the rut of the cart-wheel.

Aroused from my mental slumber by the shaking of the carriage, and launched into activity once more, I felt able for more serious thought.

From these observations and speculations about the gay caterpillar sprang up some very grave reflections. The things, as I handled them in an indolent, slumberous state of mind, seemed to be chaff and no more; but it appears by the result, that, mingled with the light chaff, some vital seeds were dropped into the ground, for on the spot afterwards some ears of real grain grew and ripened.

Here they are, as I gathered them then and there.

A youth is setting out in life. He has a bright countenance and a buoyant step. All the world is before him, and he will cast cares behind. He has great enjoyment to-day; and as he lies down he says to himself, To-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant. After some difficulties encountered and overcome, he gets upon a track that seems

to suit him. He glides along comfortably and expectant, precisely as the caterpillar glided along in the smooth cart-track.

Suddenly his course is arrested. Trouble from an unexpected quarter comes. Some huge bar is thrown across his path, and he cannot overcome it. He frets impatiently. I was in a fair way, he says, but this sickness came and thwarted all my plans. I have had very bad luck. My prospects are spoiled; my life darkened. Here I am, thrown aside, a burden to myself and my friends. If that misfortune had not fallen upon me, I was in a fair way to success and to renown.

Poor, blind caterpillar that he is! he does not see the approaching wheel, and does not know the loving heart and the strong arm of his Deliverer. The distance between this youth and God as to perception and power is greater than the distance between himself and a caterpillar. He cannot by sight find out the way of the Lord, but by faith he may. If he were reconciled to God in Christ, he would trust,—he would know that the bar which stopped his course was the rod in a loving Father's hand, extended to deliver him from impending ruin.

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matt. x. 29-31).

I shall mention one case, out of many that have come under my own observation, that illustrates the ways of God to man, and bids him be still and hopeful under providential disappointments.

A poor labouring man in the city of Glasgow found it very difficult to make ends meet. He had a wife and several children; the eldest was a well-conducted girl, who had just begun to earn a little, and to ease the burden of the over-taxed bread-winner. This daughter was seized with some ailment in the knee-joint, which rendered her unfit for work. The doctor who was called in pronounced the ailment incurable except by amputation. His judgment was confirmed by others. Here was a bar thrown across the path of a burdened man, at the moment when it had begun to grow somewhat smoother. His hopes are blighted, and his heart is nearly broken.

Observe the result. The surgeon was skilful, benevolent, and possessed of means. He interested himself in the patient and her parents. He performed the amputation with his own hands, and attended assiduously till she recovered. Then, instead of sending in his bill, he sent the girl out to school; then sent her to learn a business; and I have repeatedly visited her, healthy and cheerful, with a wooden leg, but a bright, beaming eye, managing a prosperous industry,—her widowed mother sitting like a queen in a carpeted room, enjoying an ease in her old age, tenfold more sweet that it was the gift of her dutiful and pious child.

On the benevolent surgeon fell the blessing of those that were ready to perish; and up to a Father in heaven rose the incense of praise from glad and grateful hearts.

A FRIEND IN NEED, A FRIEND INDEED.



ON a day in December, dim and cold, but not frosty, I was making my way through the park called the Meadows, which lies between the city of Edinburgh and its southern suburb, the Grange. As I approached the little iron wicket which opens from the park into the Meadow Walk, I observed that the civic authorities, watchful over the comfort of the citizens, had covered a portion of the path, that had of late become miry, with a quantity of clean, dry, sharp gravel. It was pleasant to tread the gravel, where mire had lately been; and I thought with gratitude of the city fathers.

I had scarcely passed the spot when two boys met me, bounding joyously in the opposite di-

rection, evidently bent on some predetermined play. They were of equal size—probably from ten to twelve years of age. Their clothing, though poor, was clean and tolerably comfortable. They seemed equal in all points save one: the one wore substantial boots and stockings, while the other went barefoot.

The exposed feet of the poor boy were indeed very red. All the blood of his body seemed to make a combined effort to rush to the rescue and keep alive the sorely-tried extremities; and the blood succeeded in its benevolent effort. By keeping up a rapid current through the exposed parts, it maintained them, if not exactly in comfort, yet in a state of vigorous efficiency. The poor boy tripped nimbly along where the road was smooth, and did not seem to be aware that he lacked any comfort.

As the pair reached the edge of the new gravel in the neighbourhood of the iron wicket, the one that was shod bounded on without hindrance or conscious effort; but before he reached the other side he became aware that his companion was left behind, and looked back.

The poor barefoot boy was suddenly brought

up at the edge of the gravel. As soon as he planted his foot on the small sharp stones, he instinctively drew it back, and putting himself into a half-bent attitude, he stuck fast on the border of the difficulty that had suddenly crossed his path. It was by no means possible for him to plant his feet, tender as they were with the conflict between internal heat and external cold, on the sharp edges of the stones. This was the crisis. The strong and the weak are suddenly brought together: this will test the character of one, at least, if not both. Will the strong help the weak in his time of need?

In far less time than I have taken to tell the story, the work was done. The prosperous boy turned quick on his heel, retraced his steps to the spot where his weak brother stood, backed himself as a well-trained horse backs himself between the trams of the waggon, and bent invitingly before his feeble friend. The boy of the bare feet leaped gently on, and the other bounded across the gravel with his burden, setting him down on the soft grass of the meadow.

Off went the pair hand in hand, at a gallop, to commence their sports. In all the transaction, I

think not a word passed between them. Words were not needed. It would have been out of place for the one to have asked, or the other to have offered help. Something in the interior mechanism of the one boy's soul went off, when touched by the sight of the other boy's distress, as a rifle goes off when the hair-trigger feels the touch of the soldier's finger. Off went the emotion of brotherly love, and the shot took effect instantaneously. The good deed was done.

And the most beautiful thing about it was, that the boys did not know or notice the passage of the good deed from the one to the other. They did not think that anything remarkable had taken place. It was not in their young hearts that the wonder rose; it was in mine, for, alas! I have had much experience of myself and the world. I have had leisure and opportunity to mark the lack of instantaneous, instinctive, effective philanthropy—philanthropy that does not think about itself, or speak about itself; but simply goes off like a shot when a brother's sorrow touches it—goes off like a shot, and goes through like a shot, never hesitating or halting until it has cleared the defile.

“Which things are an allegory” (Gal. iv. 24).

An allegory! and have you been cheating us out of our sympathy by inventing a story, and exhibiting a picture of fanciful benevolence? No; I have invented no story. I have told what I saw, and have kept within the limits of severest truth. But look to those words as they occur in Scripture, and you will find that an allegory is not always a fictitious tale. It is applied to the great leading facts of Hebrew history. Things that have happened may become an instructive parable, as well as things that have been invented. History is a better allegory than fable. The facts which I have recorded regarding these two boys, when set in a proper position, become a mirror in which we may read both reproof and encouragement.

Alas! how often both young and old miss the blessedness of doing good! My story tells of a very small transaction. It will never find its way into the history of nations. Yet, in its own nature, it is more permanent than imperial thrones, and more precious than imperial treasures. If we could get such acts sufficiently multiplied, the world, which is a wilderness, would become a garden. A drop sufficiently multiplied will become an ocean.

“ Little drops of water, little grains of sand,
Make the mighty ocean—make the solid land.”

Give me that spirit in every person, and that act running through every life, and I shall expect that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Two are walking together; one is weak, another strong: they come to a rough place on the path; the weak is brought to a halt, he cannot cross it: the strong experiences no difficulty at all; the exertion needed to overcome the difficulty is a pleasure to him. The strong bends his back and bears his feeble brother over the rough place. There it is—the thing is done! “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.” Give us a sufficient number of these acts, and we have enough. Fill history with them, and you have Paradise restored.


We miss the mark by straining after great things, and allowing the small things to slip through our fingers. We know the “power of littles” in the sphere of money, but not in the sphere of love. We understand the maxim, “Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves.” When shall we understand as well, that if each should show kindness to each, in all the minute microscopic atoms of

human intercourse, life on earth would become an expanse of love, like an ocean without a shore. As long as we try to grasp an ocean all in a piece, it eludes us like a shadow; while the drops which would really constitute the ocean fall through and are lost.

In matters of brotherly love, the rule, alike for young and old, is, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

THE DRAGON-FLY.



OME kinds of creatures live in water ; and some live in air. The two classes are widely different. Creatures whose nature it is to live under water, will die if they are exposed for a short time in the air ; and creatures whose nature it is to live in air, will die in a short time if they are kept under water. A man placed under the water gasps two or three times, and dies : he is drowned. A fish taken out of the water gasps two or three times, and dies : it is drowned too.

The bodily organs, such as the lungs, on which the life directly depends, are not the same in animals that inhabit the water and animals that inhabit the land. Fishes are made for breathing water ; land animals are made for breathing air.

In fishes the blood is renewed and purified by drawing in fresh water. If a fish get nothing but air to breathe, its organs being made for water, it cannot live; if a land animal get nothing to breathe but water, its organs being made for air, it cannot live.

It is the instinct of each creature to like its own proper element. A fish struggles very hard against you when you attempt to draw it out of the water; and a cat struggles very hard against you when you attempt to plunge it into the water. Every creature acts after its kind. They are fearfully and wonderfully made.

I must explain here, however, that there is a class of creatures, such as whales and porpoises, which live always *in* the water, and yet cannot live *under* the water. Although they spend all their time in the water, and can neither walk on the land nor fly in the air, yet for my present purpose they must be classed with animals that live in the air. Their lungs are made for breathing air, like our own; and if they are kept beneath the water a long time, they will be drowned. It is on this account that whales are so easily caught. They cannot remain long under water, like fishes. They can dive well; but they are

obliged every now and then to thrust their great heads out of the water for breath; and it is then that the fisherman plunges his harpoon into the poor creature's flesh.

There is no animal that can live both in air and in water. Every creature must live either in the one or in the other. Those that are made for breathing air cannot long survive in water; and those that are made for breathing water cannot long survive in the air.

But there are some kinds of living creatures that for one part of their existence live under water, and for another part live in the air. At a certain stage they pass through a mysterious change. Their organs are changed so, that while they once could breathe only water, afterwards they can breathe only air. They pass from a lower to a higher kind of life. They become new creatures. There is a resurrection out of one kind of life and into another.

The dragon-fly is one of these. This magnificent insect does not abound much in our country. It is seen on warm autumn days flying about in the neighbourhood of rivers and lakes. It is not a butterfly, but it is like one. Butterflies feed upon something which they find in flowers,

like the bees; but the dragon-fly is a greedy, bold beast of prey. It has been seen to seize a large butterfly, and settle down on a branch with its prey. It bit off the wings first, as being useless, and in one minute swallowed the whole body. It seizes and swallows beetles and other insects. In this it does good service, for it destroys some creatures which, if left alive, would have done damage to the fruit and corn.

You will recognize the dragon-fly the moment you see it. Its wings, four in number, are long, and very beautiful. The prevailing colours are varying shades of blue. The body is long and slender. It is altogether much larger, and much more striking in its colours and movements, than the common insects of this country.

But what of the young ones for next year?—for the old one never survives the winter. This is the strange and mysterious feature about the creature's nature. The mature fly alights on some leaf or flower that is floating on the water, plunges a large portion of her body under the surface, and lays her egg. She then leaves it to its fate, and never sees it again. The mother has no knowledge of her young one, and no care

about it. Meantime the egg is hatched, and produces a little active worm, that creeps about on the muddy bottom, catching and eating other creatures smaller than itself, and protected from the frost that killed its mother in the upper regions.

After a while this worm undergoes a change, somewhat like that which passes on the land caterpillars when they lay themselves up in the state called *pupa*, preparatory to becoming butterflies. There is one great difference, however, between the pupa of the dragon-fly and that of the butterfly—the young dragon-fly is very active, whereas the young butterfly is as stiff and still as if it were dead. The little creature in the third stage of its life—for it was first *egg*, then *larva*, and next *pupa*—is no longer confined like a baby to creeping on the ground. It darts through the water, like a trout, in all directions, chasing its prey.

It has a very curious method of motion. It has no fins, like a fish; and it does not use its feet as propellers, like a frog. It moves forward on the principle of a screw-steamer. The water that it draws in by its mouth as breath to keep it living, it drives out at its other extremity to

keep it going. It is well known that if water be drawn in by one extremity of any vessel—whether a steamer or a dragon-fly pupa—and driven out at the other, the vessel will be forced quickly forward.

Thus the little creature, when it wants to give chase to some poor water-insect for a dinner, begins to breathe hard, and to squirt the water out violently. This makes it dart through the water like a shuttle darting through a weaver's loom. It must have something of the nature of a helm to guide its movement at pleasure; but I do not know where that organ is placed, or how it is used.

It has another curious instrument, by which it is enabled to seize its prey by cunning, instead of overtaking it by swiftness. Under its chin, a very long, small, strong arm is fastened; but this, from its length and its position, would be very much in the creature's way in its ordinary operations, and so provision is made for folding it up when it is not needed. It has joints like a carpenter's rule, or a gas bracket. Ordinarily, it lies under the chin folded up in small space. But when it wants to seize an insect by surprise, it comes gently near its prey without disturbing

it, and then suddenly flings out the arm from its folds, catches the victim, and, bending the arm, as an elephant uses his trunk, chucks the morsel into its own greedy mouth.

But the time comes when this ugly, voracious little wretch must arise to a new and higher life. Not by knowledge, but by instinct, it comes to the proper place at the proper time. It creeps, upon a summer evening, when the water is warm, up the stalk of a flower or reed, raises its head a little above the surface, and becomes still. Then its body splits, and out comes the new creature—the long slender body and beautiful gauze-like wings of the dragon-fly. When the sun rises its wings are spread, and the new aerial being begins its free and graceful gyrations through the sky.

It seems a shadow of the resurrection. The Creator brought his work forward by stages. Man, the chief, was made not first but last. It was when he had made his way from the lowest, through many ascending steps, that, having completed the preparatory processes, he said at last, "Let us make man in our own image." In the lower orders of creation, ideas are thrown out, and forms sketched, which were afterwards em-

bodied in the immortal, made to be the companion of his Maker.

When a great artist has painted a great picture, and the work has been acknowledged as a chief work by an admiring country, some person who has been employed to sweep the painter's studio brings a few scraps of paper, covered with pencil marks, and shows them to men of skill. It is found that these contain, some one and some another feature, in slim outline, of the great completed work. These were the ideas of the artist, roughly sketched on scraps left behind—the faint germs of the features now permanently and gloriously transferred to the imperishable canvas.

In some such way, comparing small things with great, or human with divine, we may see in the structure and faculties of the lower creatures, here one and there another feature, faintly outlined, which was afterwards completed and transferred to that being whose spirit does not, like that of the beasts, at death go downward, but upward to God who gave it.

THE SOFT ANSWER.



LITTLE girl whom I knew well came to her aunt one day and inquired earnestly, "Aunt, is every word in the Bible true?"

"Yes, my dear," her aunt replied; "but why do you ask?"

"Because," the child replied, "it says, 'A soft answer turneth away wrath'—Prov. xv. 1. Now Anne [her cousin] was angry with me to-day, and I gave her a soft answer, but it did not turn away her wrath. She continued to scold as angrily as before, and I was obliged to come away."

I do not know whether her aunt was able at the time to give the orphan the right explanation of her difficulty, for I was not present at

the interview; but, having had time to consider the case, and having often thought of it since I heard it, I think I can give my readers the right solution of the difficulty now.

You have perhaps tried to remove a stone that obstructed the road; you put forth all your strength, but it did not move. You were obliged to leave it lying there, although you feared as you were going away lest it should make some poor traveller stumble in the dark. At another time and place you saw a stone on the path, and desired to remove it; you took it up in your hands, and though it was heavy and required great exertion, yet you were able to raise it up and throw it to a side.

In the first case perhaps you made more exertion, and yet were not successful. The reason of your failure was the great weight of the stone, or the depth to which it was embedded in the ground. You did what you could. You did your duty.


Now, if a companion is angry, and you give a soft answer in the hope of turning away wrath, and the wrath still continue, that is the fault of the other. You have done what you could. In all cases do what you can, whether you be suc-

cessful or not. In most cases you will succeed. You will gain your brother or sister. And even in cases where, on account of the hardness of an offender's heart, it does not melt even under the influence of a soft answer at the moment, the soft answer will return to the offender's memory when he is alone and you are far away. Perhaps he will melt under what you have said, although you do not see it.

And more still. Whether you gain your brother's love or not, the soft answer that you give is a blessing to yourself. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." You who gave the loving word have enjoyed all the blessedness of giving; and in this difficult world there is hardly anything that is easier to give, or more precious to the giver, than the soft answer to turn away wrath. It costs nothing, and it gains much. The soft answer is the power that turns away wrath; although, in some cases, the wrath is so hard and heavy that it takes more than one or two of the loving answers to take it away.

XXIV.

A HEROINE IN THE HEBRIDES.

T is a grand thing to be a hero. It is grand even for once in one's life to have an opportunity of doing a heroic deed. There is pleasure in the very act, and pleasure in the thought that other people will love you for it. We would all like to do a great and good deed, if an opportunity should offer; but, alas! it is a tame sort of life that most of us lead. Our course is as dull as ditch water; there are no grand rapids or water-leaps like Niagara in our life-stream. If somebody should even fall into the river from a boat on a fine day, and we should be near enough with a strong boat-hook to pull him out, we should be the hero of the place and the time. But nobody will fall into the water when we are on the

spot; and so we never get an opportunity of distinguishing ourselves.

There is a mistake here. Heroism is something like money-making. If you stand still, waiting for some very great lump of gold to fall into your lap, you will never be rich. People who really are bent on gaining riches, seize and keep every penny that comes in their way; and the pennies grow into pounds. In like manner, every one may make his life heroic, by acting heroically in the small affairs that make up every-day life. To act generously, unselfishly, lovingly, in every common affair of the day, is to make your whole life heroic. You will probably never be a soldier; and although you were one, there might never be a war in your time; and though there were a war, no Goliath would stalk forth from the ranks of the enemy to give you an opportunity of cutting off his head. But if you do good as you have opportunity from day to day, you will be greater than a giant-killer.

Not long ago, a young man was brought before the magistrates in Stornoway, charged with setting fire to the heather on some wild hill of the Hebrides. It is dangerous to burn the heather, for young trees or young woodcocks may be in-

jured by the fire. The youth was convicted, and sentenced to pay a fine of forty shillings; and in case he could not pay so much, to be imprisoned for six weeks. The lad had no money; his parents could not help him; and to prison he must go. When he had lain three weeks in confinement, his heart sank within him. It seemed as if he could not survive another three weeks.

His sister, who was a servant-girl twenty miles distant from the town, heard of his distress, and started on an expedition of relief. Without shoes, she walked to Stornoway, with twenty shillings—all her living—in her hand, and tried to buy off her brother. She thought, as he had endured half of the sentence, the half of the fine should suffice. After a day of toil, going from one official to another, she at last met with a benevolent gentleman who took her by the hand. She obtained the release of her brother; and in some way people contrived to give her back her hard-earned pound, to buy shoes and clothes for herself.

Let all our readers have their hearts in the right place, and they will find daily opportunities of doing likewise; for the poor ye have always with you.

XXV.

HOW A LITTLE BOY FELL INTO
A DIFFICULTY,

AND HOW HE GOT OUT AGAIN.



PROPOSE to give for this lesson a bit of a child's experience. It is now an old, old story, for it happened more than half a century ago; yet it is in one sense a new story, for it was never told till now. It has never been written, and never printed; it has lain, bottled up, in one person's memory all these years. But although it has neither been written on sheets of paper, nor graven on tables of stone, it has been safely kept. It was written on what the Scripture calls "flesh tables" of a child's heart, and it remains clearly legible in every line now that he is an old man.

The human memory is a wonderful work of God; it is a constant miracle. How many things can be written on it, over each other; and yet the one does not blot the other out! Two things suggest themselves here about this precious faculty of our nature: one is, Give glad thanks to God for his gift; and another, Do not allow anything impure to be imprinted on its receptive, retentive page.

The thing that I am about to tell happened to a very small schoolboy; and I am quite sure that I shall tell it correctly, for I have known him since his childhood as well as he knows himself.

This little fellow was the youngest of a considerable group of children that walked from several neighbouring farms in company every morning to the parish school of Aberdalgie, not far from the city of Perth. The road at one place was carried over a small stream by a substantial stone bridge; but while the girls of the party for the most part used the bridge, the boys despised that effeminate luxury, and usually crossed the stream below the bridge by stepping on the dry protruding heads of the larger boulders that lay scattered in its bed.

One morning, after a heavy rain, the stream was swollen and discoloured ; it flowed swiftly, and frothed as if it were angry with everything that hindered its headlong progress. On that day there were not many boulders seen above the water, and only the points of the largest were visible. But the schoolboys were not daunted by the sight of danger and difficulty. They might have crossed by the bridge with dry feet and with perfect ease, but ease and safety were not precisely the things that the boys wanted ; they longed for an adventure : to dare a danger, seems sweet to boy-nature. So they went down in a troop to try the stepping-stones.

When they reached the brink, and saw the state of affairs, some of them would rather have retraced their steps and taken advantage of the bridge ; but one or two of the bolder spirits dashed safely over, and tossed up their caps on the other side. The rest were then afraid. Afraid of what ? Of falling into the stream ? No, not that ; but afraid of being laughed at for cowardice if they should hesitate. The upshot of the matter was, all crossed safely except the fellow of whom I have spoken, who was the smallest of the lot.

But those who looked on Willie's stature did not see his height. His heart was as high as that of the biggest boy of the company; and he had a mighty dread of being taunted with taking the road that the girls took. It is true that some of the older boys did counsel Willie to betake himself to the bridge, predicting disaster if that advice should be despised. In vain: human beings must act by motives; and when there are conflicting reasons drawing in opposite directions, the will must yield to the stronger. The sense of safety drew Willie towards the bridge; the sense of glory dragged him to the stream and the danger.

After a moment of suspense, he dashed at the passage with a run-race, and about midway tumbled from the top of a smooth, slippery stone, head foremost into the foaming waters. Before any one could come to his aid, Willie rose and shook himself, for the stream was shallow. When he had no more concern about keeping his feet dry, he waded to the shore with ease.

Now, although the little fellow who fell into the water had not much experience, and was not capable of teaching wisdom to his friends, I, who now write the story, have had a great deal

of experience; and I am inclined to halt here a moment, and give schoolboys, small and great, a lesson which most of them need, and which may be of use to them until they become men and gain experience of their own.

The big fellows should be very careful not to jeer the little ones for any weakness that belongs to their small stature and tender age. Sometimes a case of manifest naughtiness may be best treated by a little ridicule; but it hurts the moral nature of a little boy to be laughed at and mocked for what is not really a fault, but merely the weakness of childhood.

On the other hand, the little fellows are often very troublesome to their older companions by their peevishness, and fretting, and pride. If the little ones will foolishly pretend that they can do whatever the big ones do, and do it as well, they must suffer the consequences. When the younger are gentle, and unassuming, and obedient, generally their conduct will draw from stronger hearts and hands an astonishing measure of kindly protection. But let the youngest of a party be warned, that if he bluster and make himself equal to his betters, these betters will leave him to his fate.

I know nothing more difficult in the training of youth, than to discriminate and judge wisely when an older and stronger boy treats harshly a younger and feebler companion. Unless you have witnessed every gesture and heard every word, you are not able, when called on at the climax, to determine with certainty whether the spring of the mischief has been the spontaneous cruelty of the stronger, or the provoking presumption of the weaker, taking advantage of his weakness to torment, because he expects to torment with impunity.

But, to resume my story: A counsel was held on the bank,—a counsel in which the sisters, coming round by the bridge, also joined. After reasoning, it was unanimously resolved to send the dripping urchin home; for no one would take the responsibility of recommending him to go to the school and sit there all day in wet clothes. The company separated accordingly; the majority going onward in the direction of the school, and Willie wending his way homeward alone,—this time, however, by the bridge.

The sun was bright and the wind was sharp, and as he approached home Willie discovered, to his great horror, that his clothes were almost

dry. Why should he count this a calamity? you will ask. Ah, the reason does not lie on the surface; but the thoughts of children go sometimes a good bit down below the surface, and grapple with great moral difficulties in the deep. The boy knew that his venture in the stream was a fault; but he reckoned correctly on the sympathy produced by his misfortune, to soften, if not altogether to blot out, the blame for the fault.

As long, therefore, as he was wet, he trudged homeward hopefully; but as soon as he discovered that he was dry, his hope failed. He had lost the claim for sympathy, and the serious fault remained, with nothing to shade or shield it. He was afraid to go home, lest, in lack of evidence, his story should be disbelieved. The elder brothers and sisters could give ample testimony; but they would not return till evening, and the day seemed dreadful to the imagination of the poor child.

This was his strait: and now I must tell you how he got out of it; for out of it he did get. He was a boy of some resources; and his wits that day were put to the stretch. I ought to say here, however, that he had no mother:

his father was kind and just, but he was big, and he was a man; his eldest sister, full grown and in charge of the house, was a woman; but she was not a mother: I think if a mother had been in the house ready to receive him, he would have ventured all. As it was, what could the poor boy do but lean on his own wits?

For the last quarter of a mile his road ran along the bank of a river,—a gently-flowing, rippling river, that had, half a mile further up, received into its placid bosom the boisterous little torrent which had wrought our hero all his woe. The child, lonely and apprehensive, the house now full in view before him, looked now at his clothes, alas! dreadfully dry, and now at the murmuring, friendly, suggestive river.

At last his mind was made up, and the deed was done. Be not in haste to blame him, ye who have never been plunged into similar difficulties, and, consequently, have never been exposed to the same temptations. He stepped down to the river's brink, waded gently in (for, being a daily bather on the spot, he knew the bottom well), and when he was up to the middle in the stream performed a sort of courtesy, and so dipped himself to the neck. He then climbed

up the bank, shook himself somewhat after the manner of a Newfoundland dog when he reaches the land, and walked briskly homeward with a cool skin and a courageous heart.

He had regained the lost evidence of his fall from the slippery boulder—he was wet. This was the only thing, he thought, that stood between him and the degrading accusation of playing truant hanging over him till sunset. He was received with tenderest affection; he was stripped in haste, lest he should catch cold, and dressed in warm dry clothing. When the rest of the children came home in the evening, they corroborated the story, and all went well. Father, sister, and elder brother, in succession, all passed away from the world, and never knew the little boy's stratagem.

What do my readers think of the child's act, in its moral aspect? It is somewhat difficult to separate between the good and the evil in this case. They are curiously interwoven. The dip in the river was widely different from a forgery made to prove a lie. It was conceived and completed to support a truth, but it was a kind of forgery. It was a device to make truth appear true. The best rule is to leave truth to support

itself. In the long run it is sure to prevail; but this poor little fellow was not able to take the "long run" into account. A whole day to lie under suspicion, although it was certain that he would be justified in the evening, was too much for him, and he resorted to a trick.

If one were inclined to be critical, something might plausibly be said in defence of the stratagem in its moral aspect. For example, the case might be represented thus:—The fall was a fact which could be proved by many witnesses; for a time the witnesses were at a distance; but when Willie started on his return journey he had a kind of documentary evidence about his person sufficient to prove the truth of his assertion—viz., his wet clothes; but on the way the sun and the wind accidentally rubbed out this evidence, and Willie simply rubbed it in again.

Whatever force, however, there may be in this reasoning, it would have been a grander thing to have trusted to truth, and to have despised all underhand dealings in support of it. Therefore, leaving our readers to settle for themselves the precise amount of our hero's delinquency in this transaction, we venture to suggest a thought for the consideration of his

seniors. Let them be very careful, in the treatment of children, not to tempt them to stratagem. When they show a disposition to be true, encourage that disposition by trusting them. Treat the little men as men of honour, and that will go far to make them such. To expect truth, is at least one means of getting it from children. "The fear of man bringeth a snare;" and into that snare poor Willie fell, when he stepped into the river that day and courtesied, like a Hindu paying his devotions to the Ganges.

XXVI.

A WATERSPOUT.

DESCRIBED IN A FAMILY LETTER.

STEAMER "NEMESIS" AT SEA,
400 MILES NORTH-EAST OF NEW YORK;
Saturday, April 23, 1870.



MY DEAR CHILDREN,—Hitherto our voyage has been so uneventful and prosaic, that, although my spirits had been more buoyant than they sometimes were, I could not have imparted much interest to my letters, "Story I had none to tell, sir." Stirring facts were altogether lacking, and imagination was dull; so there was neither warp nor woof. No wonder, therefore, that no web was forthcoming.

Yesterday, however, we were at last favoured with a phenomenon which comparatively few voyagers have the good fortune to see—a thun-

derstorm accompanied by a real live waterspout, with all the conditions most favourable for full observation. We could hardly have been more fortunate, if the show had been got up for our special benefit.

Late in the afternoon, with the sea smooth and the sky clear, a gentle breeze blowing from the west, as I was pacing the lower deck alone my attention was arrested by a very dark cloud right ahead, and apparently about six or seven miles distant. Its shape was conical, like a volcanic mountain; but the breadth of its base was much greater than the height of its sides. The cloud above and the sea below were of the same hue, and equally dark, but between them a space, of the apparent height of one of the ship's decks, was comparatively clear. The bottom of the cloud and the surface of the sea were perfectly parallel horizontal lines, and the sky was clear between them.

I leaned on the bulwarks and fixed my eyes very steadily on that remarkable cloud. After a little, I observed crooked streaks of lightning running through it from top to bottom. It seemed as if some mighty angel had been commanded to take the dimensions of the vapoury

mountain, and that he had flung a measuring-tape of fire from its summit to its base, shaking it out repeatedly in order to make it straight.

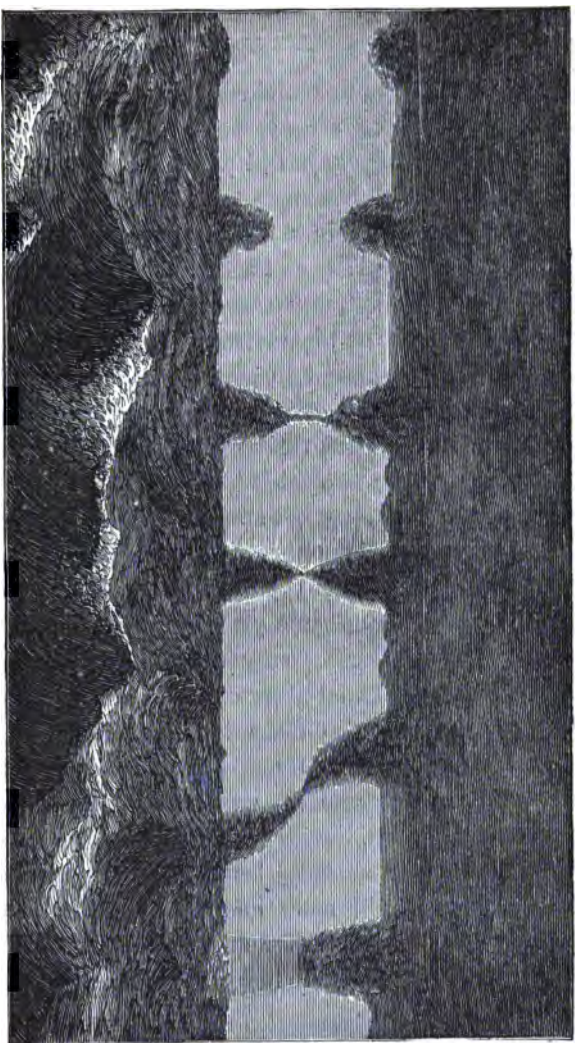
At this stage a benevolent emotion took possession of me. Like the lepers who found plenty in the deserted Assyrian camp, I could not enjoy my treasures alone. I perceived that we were approaching something that would be worth looking at, and ran astern to alarm my fellow-passengers. Glancing upward as I passed, I saw Jeannie walking on the upper deck with the Dutch lady who can speak nothing but Dutch. Having in a moment announced my discovery in English, I was seized with a violent desire to communicate it also to the solitary foreigner. Pointing forward in the direction of the cloud, I sang out, "Donner und blitzen;" assured that if this were not exactly Dutch for thunder and lightning, it must be very near it. Without waiting to observe whether my intimation was comprehended or not, I hastened to the door of the saloon, and in a somewhat excited manner summoned the passengers forward. They rose and followed, some probably thinking it was the sea serpent, and some that the ship was on fire.

When I regained my position, I found that the cloud had still more definitely assumed the shape of a conical mountain. Our course led exactly towards its centre, and we could see clear sky right and left over either shoulder.

Now I observed, a little to the left of our course, half-way between the centre and the extreme edge of the mountain, a knot, somewhat like the hump on a camel's back, protruding downward from the straight horizontal line which constituted the under side of the cloud (1).

It gradually elongated itself, and took more exact shape, until it became precisely, in colour and shape, like the blunt conical protuberance inside the bottom of a common black bottle. The next change was the appearance of a hump, of precisely similar proportions, rising upwards from the surface of the sea, and exactly under its aërial counterpart (2).

Gradually lengthening themselves, the one upward and the other downward, they seemed preparing to unite, and constitute a solid pillar between the water of the sea and the vapour that floated over it. But before the two cones came into contact, while about a quarter of the



(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

(6)

perpendicular space remained still unoccupied, a small pillar, of the apparent thickness of a young tree, suddenly joined point to point (3).

But you must not suppose that these pillars stood before us all in a row, like a company of volunteers at drill: one at a time, if you please. Begin at your left, and trace them onward to the right; thus the phenomena will defile before you as they appeared in succession to us. It was one pillar, apparently at one spot, that assumed in succession these several forms.

Soon after the two thick blunt protuberances had been joined, apex to apex, by one small perpendicular rod, they grew into one, assuming precisely the form of a sand-glass (4).

The next form (5) was probably caused by a gust of wind affecting only the under half of the pillar. The sand-glass was twisted out of the perpendicular, and the lower portion appeared less dense than the upper.

Its last appearance (6) was that of a pillar from sea to cloud, having its sides almost perpendicular, but slightly bent inward at the middle, and a still more marked difference in density between the lower and the upper half. Whether it continued longer, or afterwards

assumed other forms, I cannot tell; for at this stage we entered the fringes of the cloud, considerably to our right of the waterspout, and saw it no more.

The period, I should think, was about fifteen minutes, but none of us had presence of mind to mark the time.

I have given you the facts: the philosophy you must find out for yourselves. I suppose we may assume that water is in some form carried up from the sea by the agency of a whirlwind; probably the water rises only in the form of spray. But, even on that supposition, the clouds so formed, and consequently the rain that subsequently falls, are not like ordinary clouds and ordinary rain; they are not distilled, and consequently they must contain salt water.

If the water raised to the sky were all of this kind, the rain would not refresh the earth: it would be salt and scorching. The system of the world is well ordered. The water which in these exceptional disturbances is raised into the sky without distillation, is as nothing as to quantity when compared with that which is legitimately drawn up by the ordinary process of evaporation, leaving all the salt behind.

Behold the wise and beneficent law of Nature ! Sweet water is drawn up from a salt sea, that the rain, when it descends, may refresh and not scald the vegetation of the earth ; that the springs may quench, and not increase, the thirst of man and beast.

As we penetrated the broadside of the cloud-mountain, it seemed to lower itself and to rest upon the sea. When we were fairly in, three seamen, hurriedly sent, one to each mast, disentangled the lightning-rod wires, and threw their extremities into the sea. We felt more comfortable after this operation was completed. Along these tiny pathways, the fire that would have destroyed us will be safely conducted to the sea and quenched.

It was now very dark ; thunder and lightning and rain roared and glanced and poured with conjunct rapidity and fury all the way through. But there was no wind. It seemed as if the heavens held back their breath in order that these excited elements might fight out their battle. The scene was like what I imagine a battle to be. There was no cessation of the thunder and lightning ; gleam and crash, crash and gleam, followed and overlapped each other,

and constituted one unbroken roar, and one continuous quiver of light.

The rain, too, was something wonderful. "Bucketfuls" ceased to be a bold figure of speech, and became a plain fact. Our ship meantime held on her course without wavering, as if there had been no commotion of the elements. As the rain-water poured in white streams from her deck, she seemed like a great Newfoundland dog, making her way through the tumult with evident delight, and shaking the water off her sides, from time to time, by way of lightening her burden.

The period of transit, not marked by any one, we guessed to be from ten to fifteen minutes. On reaching the further side we emerged from darkness into light, as sharply as if we had been conducted through a door in the wall from a dungeon into day.

Here ends the first act of our marine drama: the second, though in some respects grander, cannot so readily be either figured or described. When we got to the westward of the cloud, we found ourselves between two of the grandest and most intensely exhibited contrasts that I have ever observed in nature. In the west, the

sun, within an hour of his setting, was shining in great glory. The main field of the canvas was the blue sky; but separate tufts of clouds were scattered over it, in all imaginable shapes and hues. According to their height above the horizon and the density of their masses, they were tinted and shaded with various colours, from the pure snowy white, through the gleaming gold, to the more sombre purple. But all the scene, alike the ocean floor and the sky canopy, was still and bright and beautiful. Behind us, and still near us in the east, lay the great thunder-cloud; an inky mountain lying heavy on an inky sea—the two in one, without distinguishable boundary, constituting “a horror of great darkness,” fitted to impress any human heart with awe.

I took my place on the upper deck, where there was nothing to obstruct the view, and looked alternately to my right hand and to my left. As Jeremiah could better learn the doctrine of divine sovereignty (Jer. xviii. 2) in the potter’s house than in his own, so I could better understand some of the sublime words of the Lord Jesus as I stood on that ship between the darkness and the light. To the right hand a glorious

and inviting heaven; to the left a "blackness of darkness" which might fitly figure the doom of the lost. It is quite true that the mere study of Nature, whether in her softer or in her sterner aspects, will not suffice to enlighten the mind and renew the heart; yet I felt then, and have felt at other times, that if you have known from Scripture the kindness and the severity of God, the lessons of the gospel may be more fully comprehended, and more vividly enjoyed, and more articulately impressed on the memory, when you see them reflected in such divinely constructed mirrors as these.

As the earth helped the woman (Rev. xii. 16), Nature then and there helped in me the hope of grace. That cloud is very dreadful; it is like the mountain whence the law issued to Israel—it burns with fire, and is all over "blackness, and darkness, and tempest" (Heb. xii. 18); but we have passed through it unhurt. That terror lies behind us now; we "went through fire and through water; but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place." Under us a placid sea; over us a bright heaven; and before us—near us—the haven of rest.

XXVII.

LOOK ON THIS PICTURE, AND ON THAT.



HAD occasion one day to wait a few minutes on the margin of a crowded thoroughfare in Edinburgh—the street that passes in front of the University. Beside me stood a tall woman plainly but neatly dressed: I did not see her face, and did not know why she halted on the pavement. A baker's boy, with his jacket well powdered, and a basket on his arm, came up from the opposite side, and stood still also, looking up in the woman's face. He was a small fellow; and his head and shoulders were strongly bent to one side in order to balance the weight of the basket on the other arm.

After a little he approached and gently touched the woman's arm in order to attract

her attention. It was now that I discovered that the woman was blind. She had approached by a street on which there was little traffic; but halted on the pavement of Nicolson Street, like a dog halting on the edge of a river to consider whether he should venture to plunge in and swim across. Her ear could not detect even a momentary lull in the stream of traffic, and she hesitated to attempt the passage alone. Perceiving her difficulty, the baker's boy had resolved to come to the rescue. Accordingly, as soon as he obtained the woman's attention, he said, in very winning tones, "Are you wanting to cross the street?" I did not hear her answer; but it was soon evident that she had taken him at his word, for the dear little hero took her by the hand, and placed himself in an attitude of readiness. In this position he waited some time till he saw a considerable break in the line of carts and carriages. Then, with a quick step, he led his charge across, and deposited her safely on the pavement.

After leaving her, and setting out on his own interrupted errand, he looked several times over his shoulder to see that it was all right with the blind woman, as she threaded her way along

an unfrequented street at right angles to the thoroughfare on the opposite side.

I wonder if these two have met since that day, or whether they will ever meet on earth. Perhaps they will not meet till they meet in heaven. She may then have the delight of seeing the face of her benefactor.

This was a beautiful deed. The baker's boy is a gentleman, every inch. I hope he will become lord provost of Edinburgh one day. That boy's heart is in the right place. Although his coat was dusty, his mind was finely tuned. He tasted the blessedness of doing good.

Another apprentice boy whom I did not see, traversed another street of Edinburgh, about the same time, and left his mark behind. In a street of suburban villas on the south side of the city, each gate has ornamental stone pillars on either side; and a blacksmith's apprentice, employed to carry an iron hammer to the masons employed on a new erection, took the opportunity of striking the corner of the hewn stone at each gate, as he passed, with his hammer. A lump was chipped out of every pillar, and the whole street disfigured. I did not see the boy. I tracked his footsteps soon

after. I suspect, if I had seen him, I should have inflicted summary punishment, without waiting for the slow processes of law.

He is a low fellow, although I never saw his face. His heart is black. He is, moreover, a coward. If any of the owners had been looking out, he would have refrained from the dastardly deed. To do evil for its own sake, argues a very bad character.

Perhaps some young people commit mischief of this sort without much thought. It may be an act of thoughtlessness, more than an act of malice. But every child should watch his heart and his hand with all diligence, and check in the bud these destructive tendencies. That boy did more injury to his own character than to the hewn stone pillars. The appetite for evil will grow, unless it is starved. This young blacksmith is no gentleman; and, unless he mend his manners, never will be.


I should like to see these two boys, the baker and the blacksmith, both washed, and both standing up together. I should like to see their faces photographed and exhibited. I am quite certain that the baker would show a pleasant countenance—that the peace within

would write itself upon his features. But I suspect that the blacksmith would bear traces of guilt in his looks. Features of character mark themselves in sunshine or gloom on the human countenance.

Boys, be true in the sight of God, and fair to all mankind. There is no pleasure so sweet as the pleasure of doing good. To help those who are in need, and to take delight in helping them, is to be like Jesus.

XXVIII.

THE ROSE-BUSHES.

 IN front of my father's house, on the bank of a gently-flowing Scottish river, grew two rose-bushes. They blossomed all the season through. The flowers were very beautiful, but they were all of the same form and the same colour. The pure pale pink, ever repeating itself from week to week and from year to year, became wearisome. We longed for a change, not that we disliked the flowers—for nothing could be more lovely, either in the bud or in the bloom—but we wanted something new.

I learned the art of budding. Having obtained from a neighbour some slips of the finest kind, I succeeded in inoculating them upon our own bushes. The success was great. Five or


six varieties might be seen flowering all at one time on a single plant. The process was not much known at the time in the district. Our roses became celebrated, and neighbours came to see and admire them. They were counted a treasure in the family.

When their fame had reached its height, a frost occurred, more severe than usual, and both the bushes died. They were natives of a warmer clime, and too tender for our severer seasons. Had the buds been inserted into a hardier stock, our beautiful roses would have survived the winter, and would have been lovely and blooming still. It was a great mistake to risk all our fine flowers on a root that the first severe frost would destroy.

This happened long ago, when I was a boy. I did not then understand the meaning of the parable. I think I know it better now. Young people make a great mistake when they allow their heart's hope and portion to grow into this world and this life—a life that some sudden frost may nip. Rather let your portion be a branch of the True Vine—Jesus, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. He will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

BE IN TIME.



T is said that an artist once asked permission to paint a portrait of the Queen. The favour was granted: and the favour was great; for it would probably make his fortune. A place was fixed, and a time. On the spot, and at the moment, according to her custom, the Queen appeared; but the painter was not there. Something came in his way, and he was too late. It did not suit the dignity of the sovereign to wait for him, and therefore she went away. When the foolish artist came, he learned that his opportunity was lost, and that it would never be found again.

I have heard the story—I have no means of determining whether it actually happened or

not; but if it be not a history, it will serve very well for a parable.

The King Eternal appointed a meeting with sinful creatures. The meeting was appointed to take place on this world, and in the course of our time on it. God kept the tryst on his side. Christ came into the world, God with us. He comes still to every one, and offers himself. If we keep the appointment and meet him, and open the door of our hearts, he will come in; and it will not be a likeness of Christ merely, but Christ himself formed within us—our hope of glory. The meeting with him, and taking him into our hearts, will make our fortune, both for this world and for the next. He will keep us company through life, and give us an abundant entrance into his own presence when life is done.

He is ready; he is waiting; he is inviting; he is calling,—“Whosoever will, let him come.” Ah, if we fail to meet him,—if we allow “the day of salvation” to run out, and the sun of righteousness to set, and the night to come down, the dark, dark night, before we come to the waiting Redeemer,—what then? Too late! The door is shut.

"But now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." He waits, and welcomes. The Great King welcomes all to his arms, but welcomes children most.



The "Schönberg-Cotta" Series.

Crown 8vo. Cloth, 6s. 6d. each.

Chronicles of the Schönberg-Cotta Family.

The Victory of the Vanquished: A Story of the First Century.

Diary of Mrs. Kitty Trevlyan: A Story of the Times of Whitefield and the Wesleys.

The Draytons and the Davenants: A Story of the Civil Wars.

On Both Sides of the Sea: A Story of the Commonwealth and the Restoration.

Winifred Bertram, and the World she Lived in.

The Martyrs of Spain and the Liberators of Holland; or, The Story of the Sisters Dolores and Costanza Cazalla.

Sketches of Christian Life in England in the Olden Time.

Diary of Brother Bartholomew, with Other Tales and Sketches of Christian Life in Different Lands and Ages.

Wanderings Over Bible Lands and Seas. With Panorama of Jerusalem.

Poems by the Author of "Chronicles of the Schönberg-Cotta Family." CONTENTS:—The Women of the Gospels—The Three Wakings—Songs and Hymns—Memorial Verses. Gilt edges.

The Voice of Christian Life in Song; or, Hymns and Hymn-Writers of Many Lands and Ages.

T. NELSON AND SONS, LONDON, EDINBURGH, AND NEW YORK.

WORKS

By the Author of "The Spanish Brothers."

Under the Southern Cross: A Tale of the New World. By the Author of "The Spanish Brothers." Crown 8vo, cloth. Price 6s. 6d.

The Spanish Brothers. A Tale of the Sixteenth Century. Crown 8vo, cloth extra. Price 6s. 6d.

No Cross No Crown; or, The Dark Year of Dundee. A Tale of the Scottish Reformation. With Seven Illustrations. Post 8vo. Price 3s. 6d.

INTERESTING TALES BY ANNIE LUCAS.

The City and the Castle. A Story of the Reformation in Switzerland. By ANNIE LUCAS, Author of "Léonie." Crown 8vo, cloth extra. Price 6s. 6d.

Leonie; or, Light Out of Darkness: and Within Iron Walls, a Tale of the Siege of Paris. Twin-Stories of the Franco-German War. By ANNIE LUCAS. Crown 8vo, cloth extra. Price 6s. 6d.

Pendower. A Story of Cornwall in the Reign of Henry the Eighth. By M. FILLEUL. Crown 8vo, cloth. Price 6s. 6d.

BY THE REV. J. C. RYLE.

The Christian Leaders of the Last Century; or, England a Hundred Years Ago. By the Rev. J. C. RYLE, B.A., Christ Church, Oxford. Crown 8vo, cloth. Price 7s. 6d.

BY THE LATE REV. WILLIAM ARNOT.

Laws from Heaven for Life on Earth. Crown 8vo, cloth. Price 7s. 6d.

The Parables of our Lord. Crown 8vo, cloth. Price 7s. 6d.

The Anchor of the Soul, and other Sermons. Crown 8vo, cloth. Price 5s.

T. NELSON AND SONS, LONDON, EDINBURGH, AND NEW YORK

Fables with Useful Morals.

Stepping Heavenward. A Tale of Home Life.

By the Author of "The Flower of the Family." Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

By the same Author.

Ever Heavenward; or, A Mother's Influence.

Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

The Flower of the Family. A Tale of Domestic Life. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

Herman; or, The Little Preacher: Little Threads; and, The Story Lizzie Told. With Four Illustrations printed in Colours. Post 8vo, cloth extra. Price 2s. 6d.

Waiting and Winning; or, Bread Cast upon the Waters and Found After Many Days. With Four Illustrations printed in Colours. Post 8vo, cloth extra. Price 2s. 6d.

Willing to be Useful; or, Principle and Duty Illustrated in the Story of Edith Allison. With Seven Tinted Plates. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s.

The Grey House on the Hill; or, "Buy the Truth and Sell it Not." A Tale for the Young. By the Hon. Mrs. GREENE. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

The King's Highway; or, Illustrations of the Commandments. By the Rev. RICHARD NEWTON, D.D. With numerous Engravings. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s.

Stories of the Lives of Noble Women. By W. H. DAVENPORT ADAMS. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

Watch—Work—Wait. A Story of the Battle of Life. By SARAH MYERS. Foolsap 8vo, cloth. Price 2s.

Praise and Principle; or, For What Shall I Live? A Tale. Illustrated. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

The Golden Rule; or, Do to Others as You would have Others do to You. Illustrated. Foolsap 8vo, cloth. Price 1s. 6d.

T. NELSON AND SONS, LONDON, EDINBURGH, AND NEW YORK.

Stories with a Purpose.

The Story of a Happy Home; or, The Children's Year, and How they Spent it. By MARY HOWITT. With Coloured Frontispiece and Vignette Title. Post 8vo, cloth extra. Price 2s. 6d.

Happy Holidays at Woodleigh House; or, Aunt Elsie and Her Guests. With Twenty-seven Engravings. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

Which is My Likeness? or, Seeing Ourselves as We See Others. By COUSIN KATE. With Coloured Frontispiece and Vignette. Post 8vo, cloth extra. Price 2s. 6d.

The Story of a Happy Little Girl. With Coloured Frontispiece and Vignette, and Six Tinted Plates. Post 8vo, gilt edges. Price 3s. 6d.

Isabel's Secret; or, A Sister's Love. By the Author of "The Story of a Happy Little Girl." With Coloured Frontispiece and Vignette. Post 8vo, gilt edges. Price 3s. 6d.

The Painted Bird and the Painted Text; or, The Story of a Birthday Present. A Simple Tale for Little Boys and Girls. By M. C. BUSHÉ. With Plates. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s.

Grace Elliot; or, To Seem and To Be. Foolscap 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

Parents and Children: Stories for the Home Circle. From the French of Madame DE WITT. With Coloured Frontispiece and Vignette, and Thirty-five Illustrations by ALFRED DE NEUVILLE. Royal 18mo, cloth extra. Price 2s.

Snowdrop; or, The Adventures of a White Rabbit. With Coloured Frontispiece and Vignette, and Twenty Illustrations. Royal 18mo, cloth extra. Price 2s.

Home Books

OF EXAMPLE AND ENCOURAGEMENT.

Home: A Book for the Family. By the late Rev. W. K. TWEEDIE, D.D. Post 8vo, cloth extra. Price 3s.

Schoolboy Heroes: The Story of Maurice Gray and Carl Adler. By the late Rev. J. W. ALEXANDER, D.D. With Coloured Frontispiece and Vignette, and Six Tinted Plates. Extra foolscap. Price 2s. 6d.

Success in Life: What it is, and how Attained. A Book for Young Men. With Coloured Frontispiece and Vignette, and Six Tinted Plates. Extra foolscap 8vo, cloth extra. Price 3s.

"Above Rubies;" or, Memorials of Christian Gentlewomen. By Miss C. L. BRIGHTWELL. Post 8vo, cloth extra, gilt edges. Price 3s. 6d.

The Early Choice. A Book for Daughters. By the late Rev. W. K. TWEEDIE, D.D. With Six Steel Plates. Post 8vo, gilt edges. Price 3s. 6d.

The Daughter at School. By the Rev. John TODD, D.D., Author of "The Student's Guide," &c. With Coloured Frontispiece and Vignette, and Six Tinted Plates. Post 8vo, cloth extra. Price 2s. 6d.

Youthful Diligence and Future Greatness. By the late Rev. W. K. TWEEDIE, D.D. With Coloured Frontispiece and Vignette, and Six Tinted Plates. Extra foolscap 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

Memorials of Early Genius, and Remarkable Records of its Achievements. By the Author of "Success in Life." With Eight Tinted Plates. Post 8vo, cloth extra. Price 2s. 6d.

Self-Taught Men. A Series of Biographies. With Coloured Frontispiece and Vignette. Extra foolscap, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

T. NELSON AND SONS, LONDON, EDINBURGH, AND NEW YORK.

Tales for the Home Circle.

Anna Lee: Maiden, Wife, Mother. By T. S. ARTHUR. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s.

Sow Well and Reap Well. By T. S. ARTHUR. Illustrated. Post 8vo. Price 2s.

True Riches; or, Wealth Without Wings. By T. S. ARTHUR. Illustrated. Post 8vo. Price 2s.

Little Snowdrop and her Golden Casket. By the Author of "Little Hazel, the King's Messenger," &c. With Coloured Frontispiece and Vignette. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

Under the Old Oaks; or, Won by Love. By the Author of "Little Hazel, the King's Messenger," &c. With Coloured Frontispiece and Vignette. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

Little Hazel, the King's Messenger. By the Author of "Little Snowdrop and her Golden Casket," &c. With Coloured Frontispiece and Vignette. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

The Crown of Glory; or, "Faithful unto Death." A Scottish Story of Martyr Times. By the Author of "Little Hazel, the King's Messenger," &c. Post 8vo, cloth extra. Price 2s. 6d.

Lizzie Hepburn; or, Every Cloud has a Silver Lining. With Four Illustrations printed in Colours. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

Father's Coming Home. A Tale for the Young. By the Author of "Village Missionaries, &c. With Seven Illustrations. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s.

The Story of Little Robinson of Paris; or, The Triumphs of Industry. Translated from the French by LUCY LONDON. Illustrated. Cloth. Price 2s.

Travel and Research

IN BIBLE LANDS.

The Land and the Book; or, Biblical Illustrations Drawn from the Manners and Customs, the Scenes and Scenery of the Holy Land. By the Rev. W. M. THOMSON, D.D. Crown 8vo, 718 pages, with Twelve Coloured Illustrations and One Hundred and Twenty Woodcuts. Price 7s. 6d., cloth; morocco, 15s.

In the Holy Land. By the Rev. Andrew THOMSON, D.D., Edinburgh, Author of "Great Missionaries." With Eighteen Engravings. Crown 8vo, cloth extra. Price 6s. 6d.

Bashan's Giant Cities and Syria's Holy Places. By Professor PORTER, Author of "Murray's Hand-book to Syria and Palestine." With Eight Beautiful Engravings. Post 8vo, cloth extra. Price 7s. 6d.

IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS WORKS.

Systematic Theology. By Charles Hodge, D.D., Professor in the Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey. Three vols. Royal 8vo. Price £2, 2s. Index vol., 3s. 6d. extra.

Outlines of Theology. By the Rev. A. A. Hodge, D.D., Princeton. Edited by the Rev. W. H. GOOLD, D.D., Edinburgh. Crown 8vo, cloth. Price 6s. 6d.

The Ministry of the Word. Being the "Yale College Lectures" for 1876. By the Rev. WILLIAM M. TAYLOR, D.D., New York. Crown 8vo, cloth. Price 4s. 6d.

Commentary on the Confession of Faith. By A. A. HODGE, D.D. Edited by W. H. GOOLD, D.D. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 3s. 6d.

Darwinism, and its Relation to the Truths of Natural and Revealed Religion. By CHARLES HODGE, D.D., Princeton, Author of "Systematic Theology." Post 8vo, cloth. Price 3s. 6d.

T. NELSON AND SONS, LONDON, EDINBURGH, AND NEW YORK.

New Publications.

Robert Buchanan, D.D. An Ecclesiastical Biography. By the Rev. NORMAN L. WALKER. One Volume, 8vo. With Portrait. Price 12s. 6d.

The Ministry of the Word. Being the "Yale College Lectures" for 1876. By the Rev. WILLIAM M. TAYLOR, D.D., New York. Formerly of the United Presbyterian Church, Bootle, Liverpool. Crown 8vo, cloth. Price 4s. 6d.

Nelly's Teachers, and What They Learned. By KATE THORNE. Post 8vo. Beautifully bound in Cloth. Price 5s.

Pendower. A Story of Cornwall in the Reign of Henry the Eighth. By M. FILLEUL. Crown 8vo, cloth. Price 6s. 6d.

A Wreath of Indian Tales. By A. L. O. E. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 3s. 6d.

Ever Heavenward; or, A Mother's Influence. By the Author of "Stepping Heavenward." Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

Sea Birds, and the Story of their Lives. By ELIZABETH SURR. With Illustrations printed in Colours. 18mo, cloth extra. Price 2s. 6d.

The Safe Compass, and How it Points. By the Rev. RICHARD NEWTON, D.D. With Twenty-six Engravings. Foolscap 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

Book of Medical Information and Advice. By the late J. WARBURTON BEGBIE, M.D. Containing a Brief Account of the Nature and Treatment of Common Diseases. Post 8vo, cloth. Price 2s. 6d.

Shakespeare's Dramatic Works. With Three Hundred and Seventy Illustrations by the late FRANK HOWARD, R.A.; and Explanatory Notes, Parallel Passages, Historical and Critical Illustrations, Copious Glossary, Biographical Sketch, and Indexes. Crown 8vo, 1437 pages, cloth extra, gilt edges. Price 7s. 6d.

T. NELSON AND SONS, LONDON, EDINBURGH, AND NEW YORK







